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STUDIES ON VOLTAIRE AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

EDITED BY THEODORE BESTERMAN

VOLUME XLVII

INSTITUT ET MUSEE VOLTAIRE

LES DELICES

GENEVE

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Satire inédite de Voltaire contre J. J. Lefranc de Pompignan

publiée par J. Vercruysse

Quand Jean Ribotte-Charron, négociant montalbanais réformé, adressa à Voltaire dans les premiers mois de l'année 1766 le texte manuscrit de son *Eloge de madame Bruguière de la Vaysse* (petite-nièce de Bayle), il ne se doutait pas du sort curieux que son correspondant allait réserver à son envoi. Sur la demande de l'auteur, Voltaire envoya le texte à Cramer pour en tirer quelques exemplaires (Best.12408, 12423). Leur nombre n'excéda pas la quinzaine (Best.12436); nous n'avons pu en découvrir un seul. Mais nous connaissons deux copies manuscrites: la première se trouve à Leningrad (cf. *Biblioteka Voltera*, p.1023), la seconde à Paris (Bibliothèque nationale, Nouv.acq.franç.24343).

Les pages de Ribotte-Charron n'offrent de l'intérêt que pour l'histoire locale, mais à la suite de l'*Eloge*, on peut lire une satire, inconnue, contre Lefranc de Pompignan. Voltaire y fait implicitement allusion quand il envoie le manuscrit de son correspondant à Cramer le 1er mai 1766 (Best.12408): 'Je prie Monsieur Cramer de commencer, je lui enverrai demain une petite addition de ma façon qui ne contiendra pas deux pages'. Cette addition, de 1765 ou 1766, ne peut être que la 'pompignade' que nous venons de citer. L'auteur en est, sans doute, Voltaire lui-même. Si l'aveu fait à Cramer ne convainc pas entièrement les sceptiques, l'examen du texte achèvera de le faire. On peut établir des parallèles de fond et de forme avec les multiples pamphlets que Voltaire lança contre l'académicien de Montauban. Ainsi, les allusions à la bibliothèque

de Lefranc (que celui-ci avait vantée dès 1760 dans son discours et son mémoire)[1] figurent déjà dans l'*Extrait des nouvelles* (M.xxiv.125), la *Relation d'un voyage* (M.xxiv.462), la *Lettre de m. de l'Ecluse* (M.xxiv.459) et la *Lettre du secrétaire de m. de Voltaire* (Best.10779; M.xxv.138). On en trouvera encore des mentions après 1766 dans le deuxième 'post-script' de *La Guerre civile de Genève* (M.ix.513).

Quand Voltaire parle du penchant de Lefranc pour la collection des pièces d'or, il fait évidemment allusion à sa fortune déjà évoquée dans *Les Quand* (M.xxiv.111). N'oublions pas que le Montalbanais avait publié à Paris en 1746 une *De antiquitatibus Cadurcorum ad academiam cortonensem epistola*, reprise dans ses *Œuvres diverses* (Paris 1753), ii.294-295 où il avait assez naïvement fait état de ses monnaies anciennes.[2] Enfin, Lefranc avait également mentionné dans son *Eloge* de Charles de Saint-Amand, dont nous reparlerons plus loin, les collections numismatiques du Toulousain.

Son grand-père, professeur à Cahors, avait déjà fait l'objet de railleries dans *Les Car* (M.xxiv.262), la *Lettre de m. de l'Ecluse* (M.xxiv.458) et la *Relation d'un voyage* (M.xxiv.462). En outre, Voltaire avait rappelé l'accueil particulier réservé par le public aux discours de sa victime dans la *Relation* (M.xxiv.462) en des termes qui annoncent directement ceux de notre texte.

Le retentissant *Discours* prononcé par Lefranc à l'Académie, ses *Poésies sacrées* et sa traduction de l'*Universal prayer* de Pope constituent cependant les thèmes dominants de la critique de Voltaire. Le premier est attaqué dans *Les Quand* (M.xxiv.111-113), *Les Car* (M.xxiv.262), la *Lettre de Paris* (M.xxiv.455), la *Lettre de m. de L'Ecluse* (M.xxiv.458), la *Relation d'un voyage* (M.xxiv.461)

[1] cf. *Œuvres complètes de Jean-Georges Lefranc de Pompignan suivies des œuvres religieuses de J.J. Lefranc marquis de Pompignan*, éd. Migne (Paris 1855), ii.1349-1358.

[2] on trouvera des renseignements intéressants sur la bibliothèque et les collections de Lefranc, dans l'ouvrage de Duffo, *J.J. Lefranc marquis de Pompignan* (Paris 1913), pp.418, 427, 434-439.

et Best.10779. Après 1766, nous signalerons encore les critiques de la sixième des *Honnêtetés littéraires* (M.xxiv.124-125), l'*Epître au roi de la Chine* (M.x.415) et une note de 1771 sur *La Vanité* (M.x.115).

Les *Poésies sacrées*, poèmes 'sacrés car personne n'y touche' (Best.8143; *Le Pauvre diable* (M.x.105); premier 'postscript' de *La Guerre civile de Genève* (M.ix.513), avaient souvent été prises à partie dans la correspondance (Best.7757, 10069, 10677, 10779, 12341, 12370, 14297), l'*Extrait des nouvelles* (M.xxiv.125-126), *Les Car* (M.xxiv.262), la *Relation d'un voyage* (M.xxiv.462-463), etc.

Enfin, Voltaire est revenu avec insistance sur la traduction de Pope. Nous ne citerons que les principales allusions et critiques de la correspondance (Best.8206, 8227, 10779, 12370), les notes sur *Le Russe à Paris* (M.x.124) et *La Vanité* (M.x.116), des facéties *Les Quand* (M.xxiv.112), *Les Car* (xxiv.262).

Pour achever cette série de parallèles, nous dirons que l'éloge commun de Jean Jacques et de Jean Georges est déjà fait dans *Les Car* (M.xxiv.261) et la correspondance (Best.8312, 10779), et que la mention du dîner de 26 couverts, qui clôt notre texte, apparaît dans la *Lettre de m. de l'Ecluse* (M.xxiv.459) et la *Relation d'un voyage* (M.xxiv.461; cf. encore Best.10779).

Nous avons réservé quelques points obscurs pour la fin. Il y a tout d'abord l'allusion que fait Voltaire à saint Amans, l'un des premiers évêques de Rodez.[3] Son caractère unique dans toute l'œuvre pourrait aller dans le sens contraire à celui qui résulte de nos comparaisons. Où Voltaire a-t-il trouvé le nom de ce saint évêque, guère connu hors du Rouergue? Sa vie, attribuée à Fortunat, avait paru dans les *Novae bibliothecae manuscriptorum librorum* du père Philippe Labbe (Paris 1657), ii.474-480, dans la *Gallia christiana* (Paris 1725), i.197, et l'*Histoire littéraire de la France* (Paris 1735), iii.480-481, etc. Une autre vie, en vers

[3] voir l'ouvrage capital de L. Servières, *Histoire de saint Amant* (Rodez 1885), pp.368-373, 415-416, 452-455. On peut également consulter J. Touzery, *Histoire de saint Amans* (Rodez 1918), et C. Couderc, *Bibliographie historique du Rouergue* (Rodez 1931), i.30, iv.431-432.

romans du XIe siècle, avait été citée par le juriste Marc Antoine Dominicy dans ses traités *De praerogativa allodiorum* (Paris 1654), pp.54-55, et *Ansberti familia rediviva* (Paris 1648), p.44. Citons enfin la brochure de dom Berengues, *Histoire des diverses translations qui ont été faites des reliques de saint Amans, etc. avec la vie du même saint Amans* (Rodez [1750]), 38 pp. Voltaire connaissait-il ces textes? Il est permis d'en douter. Mais il eut certainement des échos des cérémonies de Rodez en 1764. L'église où étaient conservées les reliques menaçant ruine, les restes avaient été transférés dans l'église des Cordeliers (janvier 1751) où ils restèrent jusqu'au lendemain de la consécration d'une nouvelle église (9 septembre 1764).

Deuxième point obscur: Voltaire attribue à Lefranc un panégyrique du saint. C'est en vain que l'on recherchera une telle œuvre dans toutes les éditions connues des œuvres de Lefranc. Mais si celle-ci n'a jamais prononcé l'éloge de l'évêque de Rodez, il a bel et bien fait celui de Charles Clément Martin de Saint-Amand (1702-1763), trésorier perpétuel de l'Académie de Toulouse, et grand numismate: le détail a son importance. Cet éloge ne peut se trouver que dans l'*Histoire et Mémoires de l'Académie royale des sciences, inscriptions et belles-lettres de Toulouse* (1784) ii.94-97. Une note à la page 97 du recueil nous apprend que 'M. Lefranc de Pompignan lut l'éloge de M. de Saint-Amand le 10 avril 1669 [*sic*]'. Il est évident qu'il s'agit là d'une erreur d'impression. A nous de retrouver la date exacte. Le texte de Lefranc est le treizième d'une série de 22 éloges classés par ordre chronologique, de 1747 à 1777. Ils furent tous prononcés le 25 août, jour de la séance solennelle de la Saint-Louis, et nous ne voyons pas pourquoi celui de Saint-Amand aurait été prononcé un autre jour. Ensuite, l'examen des dates des différentes séances montre que les éloges étaient généralement lus au cours de la première séance solennelle qui suivait le décès des académiciens. Ainsi, le douzième éloge, celui de Joseph de Maniban, décédé le 30 août 1762, a été lu le 25 août 1763; le quatorzième, celui de Guillaume de Nupces, décédé le 14 juin 1763, a été lu le 25 août 1764. Saint-Amand étant

décédé le 10 février 1763, son éloge a dû avoir été lu le 25 août 1763 ou 1764. Cette date coïncide avec les cérémonies de Rodez et explique peut-être la confusion, volontaire ou non, faite par Voltaire, entre l'évêque et l'académicien.

Un dernier point à éclairer: comment Voltaire est-il arrivé à la connaissance du discours de Lefranc? Quelqu'un a dû lui révéler l'existence de ce texte, mais on n'en trouve pas la moindre trace dans la correspondance. Quoi qu'il en soit, Voltaire montre à cette époque une bonne connaissance des événements du Languedoc. L'affaire Calas l'avait mis en rapport avec des Toulousains dont les lettres sont malheureusement perdues. Un exemple: il envoie à Damilaville le 21 décembre 1763 (Best.10742) une chanson sur Lefranc, qu'il dit avoir reçue du Languedoc. Il entretiendra également son confident des démêlés qui opposent le parlement de Toulouse au duc de Fitz-James (Best.10775, 10843, 10873, etc.). L'un des principaux informateurs est le premier président lui-même, François de Bastard, qui dut lui adresser des lettres qui furent bien accueillies ainsi qu'en témoignent quelques passages de la correspondance avec Végobre (Best.10860, 10869, 10876) et Damilaville (Best.11580, 11600 etc.). D'autres informateurs furent sans doute Ribotte-Charron (Best.11065) et La Vaisse (Best.12042).

Après cette longue parenthèse, il faut reconnaître que nous ne pouvons établir de manière précise comment Voltaire prit connaissance de l'éloge de Saint-Amand, comment il confondit l'académicien et l'évêque, pourquoi il le fit.

Venant à la suite de la plupart des critiques lancées contre Lefranc, le texte que nous avons découvert se présente en quelque sorte comme leur synthèse. Mais il ne met pas pour autant un point final aux attaques de Voltaire. A ce titre, notre texte mérite qu'on s'intéresse à lui. Nous le donnons dans la version de Leningrad. Les quelques légères variantes, d'ordre orthographique uniquement, du manuscrit de Paris ne méritent pas d'être retenues. Nous nous sommes seulement permis de corriger quelque peu une ponctuation assez négligée.

[Satire contre Lefranc de Pompignan]

Tandis qu'un des amis de feuë Madame La Vaysse payait ce juste tribut à sa mémoire, Mr Le franc de Pompignan étonnait les académiciens de Toulouse, par la belle oraison funèbre qu'il prononça de St Amant, mort il y a environ sept cent années! J'entendis cet admirable discours de Mr Lefranc de Pompignan, qui se signale par son éloquence en Province comme à Paris. Je crus dabord que c'était le Panigirique de St Amant le poëte, dont les vers ont un grand rapport avec ceux de l'illustre académicien; mais je fus bientôt au fait, quand il nous dit que son st amant était un Evêque de Rodès, qui, dans le commencement de l'onzième siècle, avait une grande bibliotèque et un beau cabinet de médailles. En effet, Mr Lefranc de Pompignan ne pouvait faire l'éloge que des grands seigneurs ses semblables. Il était beau sans doute à st amant d'avoir une si nombreuse bibliothèque dans un tems où il n'y avait point de livres en france. C'est d'ailleurs une si haute vertu d'avoir des livres, que Mr De Pompignan n'a pas manqué en donnant le dénombrement de ses grandes qualités au Roi, de faire remarquer à S.M. qu'il possède la plus belle bibliothèque qui soit dans la ville de Pompignan. A l'égard des médailles, nous doutons que St Amant en ait eu autant d'antiques que Mr Le Franc de Pompignan en a de modernes. Il est si attaché au Roi, qu'il a rassemblé environ cent mille médailles d'or de Sa Majesté, ce qui compose un très beau cabinet. Mr son grand père Professeur à Cahors, recommanda l'amour des médailles modernes & celui du prochain. Mr son petit fils excelle dans ces deux genres. Je fus enchanté quand il nous dit dans son discours sur St Amant, que son saint n'avait point la philosophie profane de ce siècle. C'est une chose admirable que St Amant ait résisté aux séductions de Descartes, de Gassendi, de Galilée, de Newton, de Clarcke, de Locke, et de Mallebranche. Cette remarque de Mr Le franc de Pompignan charma toute l'assemblée; chacun s'écriait: Voila un homme qui sera Chancelier de France, comme son frère sera

Cardinal et gouvernera l'Eglise. On lui prodiguait toutes les démonstrations de la joye en allongeant la bouche, en plissant les lèvres et en formant ce son aigre et perçant qui est le signe le plus certain des affections de l'âme.

A ce bruit flatteur, l'illustre orateur tira de sa poche un exemplaire de son beau discours à l'Académie Française, qui fit autrefois le plaisir de tout Paris. Ensuite il récita quelques beaux vers de ses poësies sacrées, et si sacrées, dit-on, qu'aucun lecteur n'a la hardiesse de les ouvrir. Il finit par sa prière du Déiste, après quoi il donna un repas de vingt six couverts, dont il est parlé dans toutes les gazettes.

The Earliest criticism of Voltaire's Dictionnaire philosophique

by Alfred J. Bingham

The first detailed refutation of Voltaire's *Philosophical dictionary* appeared, partly in serial form, during the years 1766 to 1769, by the eminent theologian, *abbé* Nicolas Sylvain Bergier, shortly to be appointed royal confessor and canon at Notre-dame. The *abbé*'s 'Remarques sur quelques articles du Dictionnaire philosophique', concerning seventeen of Voltaire's articles, were inserted in the *Journal helvétique* (under the patriarch's nose, so to speak) from June 1766 to November 1767, and observations on twenty-nine others were published early in 1769 as the *Apologie de la religion chrétienne* and its *Suite*.[1]

Among the 46 out of the 118 original articles of the *Philosophical dictionary* (1764 and 1765 editions) adversely criticized by Bergier, fifteen pertain to Voltaire's biblical criticism, thirteen to his views on Christianity, and eighteen to general ethical and metaphysical questions. In dealing with these the clergyman concentrates mainly on refuting his opponent's arguments on

[1] the *Apologie* and its *Suite* went through six or more French editions or reprintings, as well as German and Italian translations, during the author's lifetime, and three after his death. Cf. my biography of Bergier in the *Modern language review* (July 1959). The *Remarques* and also the *Apologie* and its *Suite* were reprinted in volumes 1 and 8 respectively of the Migne edition (1855) of Bergier's works, to which page and volume indications in this study refer. These appear in the text in parentheses directly after mention of Bergier.

philosophical and theological grounds for their alleged bias, inconsistency, false reasoning, and avoidance of the issue. He deplores what he calls the philosopher's habit of jotting down his ideas in no apparent logical sequence, begging the reader's indulgence if his refutations also seem to wander helter-skelter with inevitable repetitions.

In order to avoid duplicating these numerous repetitions, the material from Voltaire's articles and Bergier's refutations will be presented by topics rather than by articles.[2] In the present study, we shall examine Bergier's criticism of Voltaire's ideas in certain general religious and philosophical areas, such as, for example, the nature of certitude, metaphysical questions concerning matter, spirit, and god, the problem of free will versus determinism, and the philosophical alternatives to Christianity—deism and the secular virtues.

1. *Certitude and faith.* In his article *Certain, certitude*, Voltaire considers physical and moral certitudes based on appearances as probabilities at best, even when confirmed by the unanimous testimony of reliable witnesses. He accepts as immutable and eternal only mathematical certainty and the physical certainty of his existence, because the former is proved by reason alone, the latter by the fact that he thinks and feels, and both by the *reductio ad absurdum* that a thing cannot exist and not exist simultaneously. In the article *Foi*, section 1, he argues that faith is believing that which seems false to our reason or senses. While one may sincerely believe astounding things, when the contrary has not been proved, one may not honestly believe impossible or contradictory things.

Bergier (viii.650-665) cannot perceive any basic distinction between moral certitude founded on the *consensus mundi*, physical

[2] of the 72 remaining articles of the first two editions of the *Philosophical dictionary*, at least fiften merited but did not receive Bergier's attention: *Adam, Babel, Causes finales, David, Judée, Julien, Lois civiles et ecclésiastiques, Méchant, Messie, Péché originel, Prêtres, Religion, Superstition, Tolérance, Tyrannie.*

certitude dependent on perception or appearances, and mathematical certainty based on reason and logic, because in the long run all our ideas are derived from and our experience confirmed by the senses. Concerning the case of the young man's age, referred to by Voltaire, the witnesses issued statements based on the best evidence obtainable. In like manner, before Copernicus people expressed convictions that the sun rose and set and that the earth was flat, for such was the limited evidence of their senses. Similarly, before the work of several modern geometers, a number of propositions, now discarded, were accepted as logical and true insofar as mental calculation could be verified by visual observation. The fact that in all three instances the evidence was incomplete does not invalidate it, but only leads to further examination of causes and accompanying circumstances. Indeed, can we believe modern astronomical observations regarding movements of the sun and the earth, and even regarding their very existence? Sense evidence here could be very uncertain. Even flaws of logic can be detected at times in mathematical reasoning.[3]

With respect to the argument by *reductio ad absurdum* that a thing cannot exist and not exist at once, the *abbé* agrees that it supports the certitude of his own existence and the number of degrees in a triangle. Likewise, the sun shines and exists by the testimony of millions, because they cannot see it and not see it at the same time. The good and wise creator, whom Voltaire constantly extols, has not given us senses which deceive us incessantly and collectively. Besides, in the philosopher's examples of the existence of the sun and of the city of Peking, can non-existent observers perceive objects and can non-existent

[3] historical and scientific certainty is ultimately based on the evidence available subject to revision like other types of certainty. These have been extended from mathematical and scientific to moral and religious certitude, each with its own criteria and validation. So-called objective certainty is based on direct perception, on memory and on testimony. Cf. the *Encyclopedia of religion and ethics*, iii.320-324. This work is hereinafter referred to as ERE.

objects be perceived? The *abbé* chides his opponent for presenting an anecdote instead of a discussion on whether or not to believe the *consensus mundi* relative to natural and supernatural events, and adds: 'He extricates himself by ridicule; this can amuse children, but hardly satisfies men of sense.'[4]

The theologian (i.691-693) takes exception to his adversary's definition of faith as believing in the possibility of something, whereas true faith is believing in the existence of something. For instance, although from the natural standpoint, the same body cannot be in a thousand places at once, nobody will ever prove that god possessing supernatural power is not ubiquitous. Hence, a Roman Catholic may sincerely believe that Christ is in the Eucharist and elsewhere simultaneously without perjuring himself, as Voltaire implies.

Bergier deems unphilosophical Voltaire's assertion that one may not honestly believe impossible or contradictory things. And he cites French and British philosophers to show that a person born blind or deaf believes in the existence of colours or sounds on the testimony of others, and that all geometers accept the fact that an area or a space is infinitely divisible, also on the reasoning of others.[5] Hence, even philosophers cannot refuse to believe some things which once appeared impossible, contrary to common sense, incomprehensible and contradictory, because their real existence is now attested to by irrefutable proof brought to light by more thorough examination. Similarly, believing what god has revealed sometimes means faith in things beyond reason to grasp. We are then in the same position towards revealed mysteries as those born blind or deaf towards colours or sounds, and the ignorant towards the infinite divisibility of

[4] *Suite* (viii.656). ERE viii.490, affirms the validity of collective human experience of objects and events as the basis of knowledge.

[5] Diderot, *Lettre sur les aveugles* in *Œuvres*, éd. A. Billy (1935), pp.12-13, 44-45; Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, vi.12, which appeared between 1749 and 1767; Hume, *Essays on human understanding* (London 1927), sect.12, part.2, par.124.

matter. And Bergier concludes: 'Do we owe less faith in God's witness than a man born blind or deaf to the witness of men? To believe blindly in revelation when it is well substantiated is not absurd, but to refuse to believe in it is absurd.'

2. *Matter and spirit.* In Voltaire's opinion, voiced in the article *Corps*, we are ignorant of the essence of matter and spirit, while recognizing their properties, such as area, volume, divisibility, mobility, configuration, etc., for matter; and thought, feeling, will, imagination etc., for spirit. The philosopher agrees with Berkeley that matter's sensorial properties are in our sensations only but disagrees with the British thinker that matter does not exist just because its measurable properties are variable, depending on whether they be perceived by the naked eye or through a magnifying glass. On the contrary, says Voltaire, measuring instruments prove that material objects possess measurable properties apart from human perception. As for Leibniz's monads, they are to be classed with the declination of atoms, substantial forms, versatile grace, and vampires.

Bergier (viii.719-722), contradicting both Voltaire and Berkeley, does not distinguish between a thing, material or spiritual, and any of its properties, the sum of which constitutes its essence. The outlining of these properties is sufficient definition, all further questions being idle, because a thing separated from its properties is a rational abstraction not present in nature. A subject without properties and a substance without its essential attributes do not exist.[6] Even if we admit with both these thinkers that we cannot define matter or spirit, says Bergier, at least the two differ enough so as not to be confused either in their nature or in their attributes. The very certitude of our existence, according to Alembert (*Discours préliminaire*, i), cited by Bergier, enables us to distinguish between matter, exemplified in our bodies and in

[6] ERE ii.457 states that, according to the causal and dualistic view of being, a thing, material or spiritual, cannot exist apart from its properties, with matter relegated to a lower ontological position than spirit.

external objects, and spirit, recognized by us in our spiritual activities. The Abbé agrees with Voltaire that matter has the essential property of divisibility, which among other attributes distinguishes it from spirit. Matter, therefore, cannot be the immediate subject of thought, one of whose essential attributes is indivisibility. As a result, Locke's question, repeated by Voltaire and others, about thinking matter is contradictory.[7]

Matter's sensorial properties are in material objects as well as in our senses. For example, an object that is warm or coloured or scented has its parts so disposed as to produce in us the corresponding sensations. Heat, moreover, is measurable and hence present even when we are absent. Nevertheless, these material properties are not to be confused with our sensations, for if an object were not as it is perceived, god could be said to be deceiving us by our senses, which is unthinkable. Talk of matter's immaterial qualities, on the other hand, is ambiguous. Gravitation, force, movement are measurable and divisible like matter, whether or not they be material themselves. With respect to living matter, insofar as involuntary operations such as growth are concerned, they too are measurable and divisible. But, of course, the attributions of life and instinct are as indivisible as human thought and feeling.[8]

Bergier claims that Berkeley, refuting Voltaire's argument that a ruler would prove that area exists apart from our perception of

[7] Bergier admits that his antagonist never affirmed that the soul is material, but only doubted that we have one, while discussing Locke's conjecture of a material brain's ability to think. J. B. Carré, *Consistance de Voltaire le philosophe* (Paris 1938), p.44, contends that to prove Locke's questions contradictory, one would have to know the essence of matter and spirit. Merely to call it absurd is dogmatically to limit god's power. This contention was also made by L. Lévy-Bruhl, *History of modern Philosophy in France* (Chicago 1899), p.175.

[8] ERE vii.489-490 remarks that materialists can claim that thought and feeling are material properties not more unlike other properties than heat, light, sound, electricity, etc. However, thought and feeling remain immeasurable and indivisible; the other properties do not.

it, would say that the ruler, likewise viewed through a magnifying glass, would also vary in size and, consequently, could not measure accurately. Besides, Berkeley would point out that fire can destroy area and matter's other measurable properties as well as its sensorial ones, and that, therefore, none of them exists outside of the senses. And the Abbé recalls that his adversary, in the article *Certain, certitude*, affirms that the senses can only give a probability of truth, not a certainty, which can never satisfy a philosopher.[9]

According to Bergier (viii.664-665), in his refutation of the article *Chaîne des êtres créés*, Plato's clear idea of the spiritual was adopted by the church fathers. When the ancients believed with Plato that pure spirits presided over the universe, they were only wrong in admitting more than one mind ruling the creation. But they were right in supposing that only a spiritual mind could think and in asserting man's uniqueness as a rational being in contrast to even the highest apes. And the theologian observes that if philosophers of the Enlightenment speculate as to whether matter is god and whether it can think, it is because they know the material world better everyday, while neglecting to investigate the spiritual world as did Plato and the church fathers.

While the author of the article *Genèse* contends that all peoples believed matter as always having existed, Bergier (viii.463-467) insists that the Jews were an exception on this score, believing instead that before the moment of creation, nothing existed save god. The *abbé* (viii.723-724) regrets that his opponent, under *Dieu*, section 6, sidesteps the question of the eternity of matter. Actually, were matter eternal, it would be more powerful than god, would in fact be itself god, as proved by the church fathers

[9] Bergier (i.656-657) agrees with Voltaire's article *Bornes de l'esprit humain* that the human mind's limits are narrow, but here he sees the divine hand which has given us sufficient understanding of the properties of matter and spirit for our needs, and has hidden from us such useless knowledge as their essence. Today's scientists are perfecting this 'useless knowledge' as regards matter.

and never refuted. Indeed, if matter were eternal and ubiquitous, an omnipotent god could not have give it form and the universe could not have been created.[10]

3. *God.* If stars make the same angles on the eyes of all men and animals, as Voltaire declares in the article *Catéchisme chinois, 1er entretien*, Bergier maintains (viii.663-665) that this proves the existence of a divine intelligence whose will established laws governing this and all other phenomena. Endowed with a will, god could have established different laws to accomplish his purposes. The theologian criticizes his antagonist for referring to an eternal legislator and workman without indicating the distinction and connection between physical and moral laws, and for calling god supreme, self-sufficient and all-powerful without proving these traits. Surely, the question of God's nature is not useless, as alleged in the article *Dieu*, section 6. If he had a body, he would lack all the attributes ascribed to him even by Voltaire, and would have instead all those commonly found in man (vices, passions, weaknesses, etc.). Such a corporeal divinity would necessarily provoke among his worshippers a cult resembling ancient paganism, leading in turn to the same corruption in morals and religion as attended Graeco-Roman worship. To avoid such corruption and to be a 'better father, husband and citizen', as Voltaire puts it, one must believe that god is spirit and adore him in spirit, who is omnipresent to witness human thoughts and actions.[11]

Bergier (viii.669-678) objects to his opponent's conception of god as a sort of fate, and compared to Vulcan fashioning robots, in the article *Catéchisme chinois, 3e entretien.* This would suppose

[10] this last statement is from the *apologie de la religion chrétienne* (viii. 347). ERE lv.154 says that the Bible records that at the moment of creation, there was chaos, darkness and water. Among the church fathers denying the eternity of matter were Tertullian, *Adversus Hermogenes*, ii.18; Origen, *De principiis*, II.i; Irenaeus, fragments of *De universo*, no.33; Lactantius, *Instituti divinae*, ix.

[11] Carré, p.74, says that Voltaire accepts proof of god's existence without knowing his essence.

god capable of making matter think, a contradictory act, since matter being divisible cannot cause the indivisible act of thinking. Even Voltaire appears to sense this contradiction, for he says, not that matter thinks in man, but that god creates thought in man. Yet Voltaire's man, in that case, is only god's passive tool. What the philosopher should have affirmed is that god creates the soul in man, which governs his conscious life.

4. *Soul.* In reply to the article *Enfer*, Bergier (viii.727-732), like Voltaire, shows that the Hebrew, Greek and Latin words for 'soul' all mean 'life' and 'breath', which only demonstrates that a spiritual object has to be designated by a material metaphor, rather than that ancient peoples and church fathers conceived of the soul as material, as asserted under *Ame*, section 11.[12] All peoples, including the Jews, and also savage tribes totally ignorant of philosophy and theology, have distinguished between body and soul. That is, they have been persuaded that each body or object contains a spirit responsible for any movement or change occurring in it, a persuasion which, in turn, resulted in polytheism. More recent accounts of Negroes, Hottentots and other primitive peoples would indicate belief on their part in the soul's life after the body's death[13]. Doubts concerning the nature of the soul and of the future life only arose among civilized peoples when philosophers began to dispute about everything, attacking these basic truths revealed by god to men through conscience and nature.

While Voltaire, in the article *Ame*, section 11, doubts the soul's existence because it cannot be defined, described or proved by

[12] soul means breath in *Genesis* ii.7. ERE xi.738, 746 likewise give the meaning as breath. Bergier's *Eléments primitifs des langues découvertes par la comparaison des racines de l'hébreu avec celles du grec, du latin et du français* (1764), was re-edited and reprinted four times.

[13] ERE xi.896 supports this assertion, as does Bergier's *Origines des dieux du paganisme et le sens des fables découvert par une explication* (1767), re-edited or reprinted three times.

reason, Bergier (viii.617-623) affirms it because its effects through thought and feeling cannot be denied. Man's inner certitude that he thinks and feels proves that he possesses a soul, source of all his spiritual activities.[14] His thoughts and feelings, being immaterial are indivisible, and so is the soul which controls them and which can experience two or more sensations simultaneously. Voltaire himself, even without accepting proofs of the soul's existence offered by revelation, by the very fact that he thinks and feels, should be persuaded that it exists as his spiritual essence and as the principle of his indivisible and therefore spiritual activities. Belief that the latter are governed by the soul is not invalidated by the soul's inability to control the body's involuntary operations, such as digestion and blood circulation, nor does this inability support the Greeks' belief in an animal soul. Indeed, we do not know for certain whether an animal's active force is in him or outside of him. On the other hand, we know, not by reason, but by inner certitude that our soul is separate from the body. Not to believe this inner certitude that we have a soul and a will of our own is to believe that god wishes to deceive us by this feeling of certitude in order forever to delude us. But this certitude is confirmed by the distinction drawn between involuntary operations controlled by necessary laws and voluntary operations controlled by the mind and the will. It is inseparable from the metaphysical certitude of our own identity, accepted even by Voltaire under *Certitude*. Because a man knows that he is himself, he also knows that he, rather then god in him, exists, wills, thinks, feels and acts.

Bergier recalls that his opponent, under *Dieu*, *Fraude*, and *Catéchisme chinois*, *3e entretien*, defends the idea of a hereafter of rewards and punishments, which presupposes the soul's spirituality and immortality. Elsewhere, he often attacks revelation as false,

[14] ERE iii.324-332 would appear to equate inner certitude with non-logical or moral certitude which, of course, might be based either on genuine faith or on the will to believe. ERE v.339-340 would seem to define inner certitude as awareness, that is, the first things we experience beyond which we cannot go and upon which all knowledge depends.

useless and absurd, while here, under *Ame*, section 11, he presents it as basic to our belief in the soul as spiritual and immortal. But the *abbé* denies that revelation alone strengthens man in this conviction, for this does not explain its presence among primitive and ancient peoples and some philosophers.

5. *Fate.* Bergier (i.676-682) concedes that his opponent is right, in his article *Destin*, to claim that Homer was the first author to express the notion of fate, but he sees no proof here of its prior existence.[15] The Greek gods, forever contending, required a higher law. The belief in fate attested to the need of faith in one god, arbiter of the universe and of mankind. As for the Pharisees, Bergier cites the Jewish historian Josephus to show that, while admitting the role of fate, this Jewish sect still believed in man's power to choose good or evil. With respect to philosophers, the *abbé* says that numerous Epicureans and others denied fatalism, while Stoics, such as Chrysippus, like the Pharisees, accepted the existence of free will within a universal fate, and of conscience along with causation.[16]

It is false to imagine god subject to any laws during or after the creation. His will and mind established physical laws whose effect he can and occasionally does suspend. They govern inanimate objects, including minerals and plants, and the involuntary operations of animals and men. But the latter two are essentially free, intelligent beings endowed in varying degrees with the power given them by god of making their own decisions. It is contradictory, as Voltaire does, following Hobbes, in the article *Liberté* and elsewhere, to picture man free in action but not in choice, for a faculty which is not free cannot produce free actions.

[15] Bergier also states that Moses, assumed to have written the Pentateuch, lived 700 years before Homer, whose works, therefore, are not the oldest in the western world, as Voltaire said. No mention is made by either writer of the much older *Book of the dead* or of the *Code of Hammurabi.*

[16] Josephus, *Antiquitate judaica*, xviii.14, and *De bello judaica*, ii.159. ERE vii.904 notes that the Stoics left man freedom within a cosmos of cause and effect. Chrysippus, however, was unable to square free will with total necessity.

And since, according to the philosopher, we as rational beings cannot will something without a reason or motive, god himself, whose reason and wisdom are infinite, cannot do so either and cannot be subject to fate or nature. To limit him in any way is to run counter to the philosophic concept of an omniscient and omnipotent god, as well as to the religious belief in providence. Only god as the universal force can be conciliated with fatalism.

Voltaire's statement that all is fixed means in reality that god chose the present arrangement of the universe because he wanted it, with inanimate beings ruled by necessary laws and human beings led by divine assistance which still allows them freedom of choice. The use, good or bad, which men and animals make of their freedom does not disturb god's order and designs, because he has foreseen, though not determined, all their future and possible choices.[17]

Bergier (viii.658-663) sees no fundamental difference between the strict fatalism of the ancients and Voltaire's determinism under *Chaîne des événements*. This system is in conformity with his insistence that in life everything is necessary, and that men are pure machines like planets, whose souls are god himself. The latter, in turn, is the immediate cause of predestined events with no power to control them. On the other hand, whatever good or evil a man does is a purely physical phenomenon for which he is not accountable.

Against this the theologian exalts man as a free agent possessing an inner certitude of his freedom and power to make decisions. Far from being totally passive, man is himself the first and immediate cause of his will and actions, free at any time to choose

[17] ERE ix.199 holds that necessary, universal laws expressing divine will imply that they are capable of change, whereas if the only reality consists of the primary properties of matter which, in turn, would govern mind, these laws merely express a mechanistic and changeless world. ERE vi.127 says that religion demands that god be omnipotent and omniscient to realize his ultimate purposes while allowing for changes in man's moral life via freedom of choice.

among two or more courses of action. After all, even the author of the *Dictionnaire philosophique* himself admits that Magog, reputed to be the first Russian, could spit to the right or to the left of mount Causasus and sleep on his right or his left side. This freedom of indifference is acknowledged here by the philosopher on the Newtonian grounds of a universe never completely filled and of movements dying out and reviving. But in the article *Liberté*, he rejects freedom of indifference even for the most insignificant acts, which would seem to rule out causes without effects, which he had asserted previously, as well as movements becoming extinct, and the existence of void or emptiness in the universe.

Men know that they are vouchsafed the opportunity of deciding and acting for themselves through that freedom of indifference scorned by Voltaire, upheld by Alembert, and cherished universally by men everywhere.[18] They do not feel necessarily impelled by ideas suggested to them by their circumstances or by their instinctive and involuntary feelings. Neither fate nor god thinks or wills for them. Responsible for their choices and actions, their conscience judges them right or wrong in this life, and after death they can be fairly brought before divine judgment.

The *abbé* declares that man must choose between the conviction, based on inner certitude and on observation of his and other men's spiritual activities, that the principle of his life as a free agent is his soul, or the belief that men and beasts and plants are all subject entirely to universal laws like the stars and planets. The choice is between a spiritualism grounded in religion and a materialistic fatalism expounded by ancient Stoics and Epicureans and by modern freethinkers like Spinoza and Voltaire.

[18] the *Discours préliminaire*, i, bases human freedom on man's inner certitude that he makes his own decisions. ERE vi.125 says that freedom of indifference is a contradition in terms. According to Carré, pp.67-68, Voltaire abandoned freedom of indifference and espoused the idea of god forever acting upon eternal matter. Only the theory of final causes separated him from the materialists.

Bergier endeavours to disclose the weakness of his adversary's examples of the workings of fate. If a drunkard enters a monastery and stops drinking, as depicted under the article *Caractère*, he is to be praised for putting away temptation, according to Bergier (i.657-658), and for embracing a way of life where, among other beneficial influences, physiological changes would bring about spiritual ones. The clergyman agrees that religion and ethics can only restrain but never destroy instincts and passions, adding that this is all they should do. When the philosopher declares that we can only conceal or perfect our character, but never add or subtract any traits, the theologian concurs, but he adds that god does not expect us not to be inclined towards vice, but only to avoid it, for 'the virtuous man is not the one who is exempt from passions, but rather the one who knows how to vanquish them.' For the drunkard to use religion and ethics to curb his nature is not simply one passion (*i.e.* religious faith) devouring others, as is claimed, but rather is it man calling on a higher power to help him obey conscience.

It was Bolingbroke's ability to exploit the occasion of a court squabble, according to Bergier, rather than the squabble itself, which led to the Treaty of Utrecht. The latter depended on important causes and would have taken place under other favourable circumstances just as well. As for Philip v's acquisition of Naples and Sicily from Austria, he might have obtained them even if he had remained a widower or had married a German or a French princess instead of an Italian one. In that case, of course, the reigning prince at Naples would not have been born, but the fact that he was born did not depend on the acts of a British duchess. This line of reasoning confuses true causes with mere attendant circumstances.

Bergier interprets his opponent's reference to Charles I's so-called inevitable execution to mean that regicides are not more reprehensible than a falling stone which might have crushed the king. The *abbé* quotes the philosopher-historian qualifying Ravaillac's assassination of Henri IV of France as predestined by

immutable laws, as irresistibly precipitated by interconnected events and conditions governing the assassin's life, and as a link in the great chain of destiny.[19] He judges fatalism as the height of absurdity, 'the ravings of ancient philosophy for which the modern should blush', adding slyly that 'as philosophers are predestined to poison the public, the government on its part is predestined to punish them.' He would replace fate by providence guiding and motivating man by grace, but without depriving him of choice. Thus, god influences human souls indirectly towards spiritual ends just as he moves directly towards material ends the lives of plants and animals and the existence of inanimate objects.[20]

6. *Evil.* The *abbé* (i.652-656) can fully undertand why the philosopher declares, in the article *Bien (tout est)*, that 'this is not clear' anent the origin of evil, because for a fatalist who denies freedom, this problem is far more perplexing than it is for a Christian. To be consistent, the fatalist must admit that god causes physical evil, not as a just judge who punishes the guilty, but as a despot condemning innocent sufferers without intending to improve them. For lacking freedom of choice, they could hardly be expected to improve. And for the fatalist lacking belief in god as providence and in immortality, nothing can quell his revulsion at the sight of evils afflicting mankind.

[19] *Essai sur les mœurs*, ch.174. Curiously enough, Bergier neglects to stress Voltaire's making out scoundrels of history as victims of fate, and yet reproaching them for their villainy as if they were free agents. Carré sees no paradox in Voltaire simultaneously accepting necessity and upholding freedom of action, though not of will or choice. Nor does he detect any inconsistency in his preaching the need to act justly to man pictured as a machine. Or the contradiction of dwelling on the necessity of moral judgment in a god presented merely as the universal regulator.

[20] in his remarks on the article *Catéchisme chinois*, 3e entretien Bergier is pleased to hear one of Voltaire's mouthpieces, the Chinese philosopher Cu-Su, assert that men are free to do what they want, but underscores the contradiction of this assertion as applied to men totally motivated by God or by destiny.

The theologian does not quarrel with the author of *Candide* about the contradictions of Leibniz's idea of an omnipresent god unable to create other than what he has already created. This would cancel the notion, dear to 18th century proponents of human progress, that education can make man abler, stronger and more stable. Nor does Bergier contest the vanity of the British optimists' conception of universal order in which the sum of particular evils produces the general good. But Bergier, correcting Voltaire's interpretation of Lactantius's reply to Epicurus's question, says that what this church father really meant was that god made us wise enough to escape avoidable evils and to appeal to him to console us in unavoidable ones. Such wisdom, based on knowledge of God instead of on vain speculations, is not divinely granted by a god producing evil, as the philosopher contends, but is accorded man in order to overcome evil and suffering. Because we possess this wisdom, preventive measures against misfortune envisaged are neither futile nor superfluous. Were this wisdom denied us, we would have to proclaim with Voltaire the uselessness of calling in a doctor to effect a cure which either would or would not take place in any case without his services. Were there no evil or suffering in the world, on the other hand, man's virtue and wisdom would be of no use, man would certainly not be responsible for his lot, and he would not obtain the reward of his conduct as god intended. We cannot accuse god of heartlessness for leaving our fate in our hands and our happiness in the hereafter dependent on our conduct in this life. Nor can we blame god if our woes stem from abuse or neglect of the intelligence that he has given us.

7. *Religion and ethics.* The *abbé* Bergier (viii.612) agrees with Voltaire's *Préface* to the *Philosophical dictionary*, that the dogma of providence, which has been proved to all reasonable minds, is sacred and necessary to human happiness, as the philosopher puts it, and that 'no honest man should expose his readers to the risk of doubting a truth which can do no harm in any case and can always do much good.' But the *abbé* cannot see how the author can

uphold belief in providence in the *Préface* and fatalism in such articles as *Chaîne des événements*, *Destin*, *Liberté*, *Nécessaire*, etc. Nor can he understand how he fails to realize that without the dogma of immortality, that of providence has no meaning.

While Voltaire admits that religion of some kind is needed by the élite and by the masses of a country, Bergier (viii.678-680) reproaches him for not explaining, under *Catéchisme chinois*, 4e entretien, why reason and natural religion alone unaided by revelation have not prevented many peoples from cults that dishonor the gods whom they claim to worship.[21] This is what comes of advocating freedom of conscience, thought, and expression, and of preaching that 'natural law permits each man to believe what he wants as it does to eat what he wants'. The result, according to the theologian, is that a few persons follow philosophic sophistries, many more trust in the absurdities of the Buddhist god Fo, while millions adopt the errors of Lao-tse and all the reveries of Chinese priests condemned by Voltaire himself. Unrestricted toleration, on the pretext that God is father of all men, would class as true religions all the cults to animals, idols, fetishes and lamas, all the dreams of Buddhist monks, Brahmans and disciples of Laokium (Lao-tse). On the contrary, natural law is subordinated to god who wants us to follow the religion he prescribes for us. While he does not need our prayers and sacrifices, as the philosopher says, we need to make them to him. But by admitting tacitly that god can receive our prayers, one also has to admit that one of the creator's immutable laws is the power to grant the prayers of true believers.

Bergier (i.693-694) knows of no cities where the dogma of a just god alone preserves virtue and security among its citizens, as imagined in the article *Fraude*. Nor has he heard that philosophers

[21] in his *Apologie de la religion chrétienne* (viii.550), the author supports Voltaire who, under *Catéchisme du Japonais*, conceded that philosophers, generally living among the upper classes, are poor judges of what things, including religion, are suitable for the rest of mankind.

denying rewards and punishments after death are notable for cultivating virtue. Far from helping those practicing a religion which inspires virtue, as Voltaire maintains, other philosophers, including himself, have attacked it, as have most modern philosophers imbued with skepticism, materialism and fatalism. From such unbelievers, one can hardly expect assistance in establishing widespread belief in a just god. Nobody has ever seen or will ever see the mob virtuous and public-spirited without believing in providence and in the life beyond, and merely through enthusiasm for virtue and love of one another and of life.[22]

Regarding a society governed by secular ethics, as endorsed under *Catéchisme chinois*, 2e entretien, the clergyman is concerned (viii.686-688) with the problem of restraining men's baser instincts. The golden rule, whether first enunciated in the Confucian *Analects* or in the Christian gospels, would be inadequate to protect society without belief in divine judgment. He expresses doubts about the efficacy of a moral system based on reason, conscience, social laws, and on uncertainty about the future life. In such uncertainty, reason and conscience would probably not induce us to resist our evil tendencies, nor would social laws alone be likely to curb tyrants aware that others have died a natural death, especially when the strongest belief in immortality is often insufficient to stay their wickedness.[23]

Bergier considers Rome and China most unconvincing examples of a secular society's virtues and of natural religion's power to preserve the state and protect its citizens. Concerning the Roman aristocracy and intelligentsia, described under *Athéisme*, section 4, the *abbé* agrees (viii.635-646) that they were

[22] civic pride and the quest for security are basically social ideals, not religious virtues, hence not perforce dependent on any cult. Among ancient philosophers, Aristotle, Epicurus, Socrates, Zeno, Cato and Epictetus cultivated and encouraged virtue without belief in divine judgment. Cf. ERE v.323-330, xi.741, 833, 860.

[23] ERE v.469 states the Christian position that man is powerless to do good or to resist evil without divine grace.

at heart atheistic and did not believe in the monotheism allegedly taught in pagan mysteries. They surely contributed to the fall of the republic and to their nation's decline. But Bergier disagrees that they constituted a set apart from the rest of the population. On the contrary, such a set could subsist, whether in Rome or in China, only because the masses anchored their belief in some sort of religion, even a false one, preferably one stressing a life beyond the grave. In fact, says the clergyman, atheists and unbelievers are better off in a society governed by a religion guaranteeing their security and well-being than they would be just by themselves or under a godless ruler and an atheistic court, whose perfidy and vindictiveness arouse Voltaire's fears. It is inconsistent, therefore, to insist with Bayle that a society of atheists could subsist, when an influential minority of them speeded the fall of the Roman republic and the decay of China, while still affirming, under *Catéchisme chinois*, 3e entretien, that society's very existence depends on belief in providence on the part of both its rulers and its members. And Bergier sees a similarity between the Roman and French philosophers, both of them professing the need for religion to maintain the believing society in which alone they could survive.

If the Chinese constitution and religion are the world's best, as outlined in the article *De la Chine*, Bergier (i.671-676) wonders why the masses starve while officials plunder the treasury and accept bribes, as reported by the British admiral, George Anson, as well as by Jesuit missionaries who also call attention to practices of exposing unwanted infants, of severe corporal punishment of children, and the incontinence of Chinese masters with their female slaves, even though slavery and incontinence are forbidden by Chinese law and condemned by Confucius and Chinese intellectuals. One cannot reconcile Voltaire's praise of the morals and government of China with references by Montesquieu to the disrecpect shown its women, to the trickery and cruel despotism of its officials, and to over a score of general revolutions accompanying dynastic changes, to say nothing of countless

palace coups.[24] According to the *Lettres édifiantes*, Confucius's injunction to practice justice and mercy, which Voltaire appears to take seriously, is not applied by the Chinese in war, in which they are notoriously cruel and callous, especially in their treatment of prisoners. Such treatment is in sharp contrast with that accorded by French and German commanders, such as Condé and the duke of Brunswick. Bergier remarks that only when the Chinese give in practice an example of moral and social responsibility, according to gospel ideals, will philosophers have the right to blame western Europeans for not admiring the so-called virtues of the Chinese.

The *abbé* applauds his opponent's admission, in the article *Catéchisme chinois*, 3e entretien, that belief in a future life of rewards and retribution is reasonable, necessary and in harmony with god's character. This belief and the acceptance of human freedom, however, are inseparable, for otherwise god would be passing judgment on men for acts committed under his sole control or under that of fate. But Bergier protests against the reason of Voltaire's other mouthpiece, the emperor Kou, for finally accepting immortality as merely a useful belief, 'good for peoples and princes', while omitting mention of philosophers in this connection. Presumably, being concerned with truth rather than with usefulness, the latter would remain doubtful of a hereafter and, indeed, of all spiritual phenomena. More important still, by basing one's faith in an afterlife on its usefulness rather than on its certitude, Voltaire may lead unsuspecting readers, dazzled by his sophistry and ill-informed about proofs of the soul's existence and immortality, which have not been presented, to prefer the philosopher's alleged truth, arguments for which have been repeated in several articles of the *Philosophical*

[24] *De l'esprit des lois*, vii.9, viii.21, xii.7, xvi.8, xix.10, 20. Montesquieu, however, admired many Chinese laws and institutions while abhorring their tyranny. Infant exposure, frequent harshness shown to children, parents killing their offspring considered to be a minor legal offense, had long been current in China.

dictionary and elsewhere. Yet, if such a faith is so necessary to mankind, it cannot be an error, for god has not so created men that error is more apt to lead them to virtue than truth. It cannot be a mere probability, for god could never base his system of ethics reflected in conscience on anything short of certitude without deceiving man, which is unthinkable.

The clergyman considers it as absurd to declare that we have no thoughts or feelings after death because we did not have them before birth as it is to say that a new-born child will not exist tomorrow because he did not exist yesterday. In any case, the soul must survive the body, for a spiritual substance being necessarily indivisible is also by definition indestructible.[25] Above all, if there is a Providence governing a world where virtue often goes unrewarded and vice flourishes unpunished, there must be a world beyond where divine justice is meted out.

Before evaluating Bergier's views on metaphysical and moral problems, his epistemological premises should be made clear. He accepts Locke's concept of experience derived solely from the senses. On it depends certitude based on witnesses, perception and reason, as well as the self-evident certitude of one's own existence and identity. One's knowledge of the material world reposes on these certitudes, pending further inquiry and subsequent changes in one's ideas. Similarly, one's knowledge of the spiritual world comes through faith in god, pending a more perfect understanding of that world in the life beyond.

Bergier asserts that the certitude of our existence enables us to distinguish between our spiritual and material attributes and, by analogy, between those of spiritual and material things and beings around us. Material and spiritual objects cannot exist apart from their properties. This leads Bergier to deny the distinction

[25] ERE xi.736-737 presents the soul as surviving its temporary sojourn in the body and as possessing moral freedom and responsibility, but not as pre-existing before the body's physical birth.

between the essence and the attributes of matter and spirit. Not knowing the essence of either, Bergier, according to materialists, is in no position to dismiss, as he does, Locke's question as to whether a material brain can think.

The *abbé* accepts the proof of god's existence and nature by the argument from design and by the voice of conscience. He proclaims the freedom of divine will which might have chosen another arrangement of the universe had god so desired. But his denial that god is limited by universal laws is inconsistent with his denial that god could make matter think, again according to the materialists, who would claim that thought and feeling could be properties of matter not more unlike other properties than heat, light, sound, extension, etc.

Peoples have always designated the word 'soul' by the words 'life', 'breath' or some other material metaphor, without, however, implying that the soul itself was material. On the contrary, says Bergier, their belief in the soul's spirituality is evidenced by their conviction that it lives on after the body's death. If Voltaire doubts the soul's existence because its essence cannot be known, Bergier believes in it because our spiritual activities are irrefutable proof of its existence. The *abbé*, nevertheless, does not show how the certitude of one's existence through consciousness necessarily demonstrates that one possesses a soul.

Bergier draws a distinction between inanimate objects, under which category he places plants and minerals, whose involuntary functions are governed by universal laws, and animate beings, namely, animals and humans, whose involuntary functions are likewise governed, but over whose voluntary functions they themselves exercise the power of making decisions. These cannot disturb the divine order and design, for god has foreseen, though not determined, all possible and future choices of animate beings. This permits man moral freedom under universal law and justifies god in passing judgment upon man after death. Here, the *abbé* grasps at the straw of freedom of indifference acknowledged for a time by Voltaire and Alembert themselves on the Newtonian

theory of voids and of cessation of movement in the universe. Bergier, moreover, fails to explain how consciousness in itself evidences free will.

Without being able to solve the problem of evil, the theologian maintains that it is far more baffling to a fatalist who denies freedom or to an optimist whose general good is the sum of particular evils than to a Christian whose belief in moral freedom and in immortality depend on the possibility of evil in the world and on his reaction to it. Man was created wise enough to escape avoidable evils and to appeal to god to console and support in unavoidable ones.

Bergier points out that peoples dependent only on reason and natural religion, without support of revelation and miracles disdained by miscreant philosophers, have not been able to avoid idolatry and polytheism. To be consistent, the advocates of unrestricted toleration must accept as *bona fide* religions all forms of worship, however extravagant or immoral. They must contend that the masses of people will be virtuous and public-spirited solely by adoring a just god and without believing in providence or immortality preceded by divine judgment. They must insist that agnostic rulers, having no fear of god or of the hereafter, will observe the golden rule and live justly with no hope of ultimate reward, no fear of eventual punishment should they deviate from the path of virtue.

Belief in providence and immortality is necessary rather than merely useful to mankind. It is also inseparable from acceptance of human freedom, for otherwise man, being morally irresponsible, could not be fairly judged for acts under the sole control of god or fate. But god being by definition just, there must be a future life where, in contrast to man's existence on earth, vice is punished and virtue is rewarded.

The Voltaire-Hirschel dispute: unpublished letters and documents

by James R. Knowlson and Harold T. Betteridge

Among the papers of the late professor W. B. Stevenson, which are now in the library of Glasgow University,[1] are three letters written by Voltaire, together with a number of other documents, which, with the exception of a single letter from Frederick the great to his chancellor, Samuel Cocceji,[2] are all directly concerned with the Voltaire-Hirschel trial of January/February 1751. Although a number of these documents were described briefly by professor Stevenson in a paper given to the Glasgow archaeological society in 1911, the published version of his paper[3] contains the text of only one of the Voltaire letters, which was printed again in *Voltaire's correspondence* (Best.3764), and that of a single legal document in Latin.

It was Stevenson's intention to publish a complete account of the trial,[4] incorporating this new material, which had not been

[1] we wish to thank the Keeper of manuscripts, mr. J. L. Weir, for his help, and the Librarian, mr. R. O. McKenna, for permission to reproduce these documents in their entirety. They are classified as Bi 15 b., W. B. Stevenson papers, 5.

[2] this letter from Frederick the great, dated 28 May 1755, was published (from another copy) in *Acta borussica* (1910), ix.278.

[3] W. B. Stevenson, 'A Find of unpublished Voltaire letters in Glasgow', *Transactions of the Glasgow archaeological society* (1912) n.s. vi.282-288.

[4] this is clear from a letter of professor Stevenson to the Secretary of the Glasgow archaeological society, dated 26 May 1948, on the occasion of an unsuccessful attempt by an American scholar to obtain photocopies of these documents: this correspondence, along with the letters concerning the papers, is preserved with them.

available to professor W. Mangold[5] when he presented the case in 1905. But as Stevenson died before he was able to carry out this plan, the remaining six documents, including two Voltaire holograph letters, have so far remained unpublished. In view of the time that has already elapsed since the original discovery of these documents, it seemed advisable that they should be made available as soon as possible, rather than that we should undertake at this stage any lengthy reconsideration of what is a highly involved affair.

Since Stevenson's article is not easily accessible, it may be helpful first to summarise briefly how the papers chance to be in Glasgow at all. Originally they belonged to Samuel Cocceji, who was Frederick's chancellor and the judge in the Voltaire-Hirschel trial. According to a note made on one of the documents, they were handed down within the family by way of Cocceji's daughter to her grandson Gustav Ferdinand von Tempsky, who lived temporarily in Glasgow in 1858, before going out to New Zealand, where in 1868 he was killed fighting in the Maori war. For a reason now unknown, the documents then passed into the possession of professor Stevenson's cousin, the reverend William F. Stevenson of Rutherglen, among whose papers they were originally discovered.

The documents first described by professor Stevenson in 1911 were five in number. We print them only when they have not been published before.

1

A folio sheet (24 × 19 cm) written on the first three pages. It is a *mémoire* to the court hearing the case, and is written in the first person, but not in Voltaire's own hand. There are, however, three minor amendments to the text by Voltaire himself. His

[5] W. Mangold, *Voltaires Rechtsstreit mit dem königlichen Schutzjuden Hirschel, 1751* (Berlin 1905).

deletions are set below in angular brackets, and his additions in parentheses. Stevenson (p.286) described this document as 'the only one of Voltaire's frequent *mémoires*, known to be still in existence'.

Au Chateau ce 5 Janvier 1751

1° Mon avocat ayant été malade n'a pû achever son Mémoire aujourd'huy. Ce Mémoire n'est long que parceque le Juif deffendeur a voulû embrouiller une affaire très claire et y ajouter des choses étrangeres

Rien n'est plus simple que ce Procès.

Le Juif a promis le 16. Decembre de rendre une lettre de Change et tous les papiers qu'il avoit à moy de quelque nature qu'ils fussent.

Il ose produire aujourd'huy des papiers entécédents, à ce 16. Decembre, il a volé ces papiers qu'il avoit raportés dont j'avois fait un pacquet que j'avois jetté dans la cheminée avec tous les autres écrits en soldant le compte avec luy. Il est donc punissable de produire ces papiers, par lui frauduleusement pris et gardés.

Ces Billets d'ailleurs anéantis par la transaction du 16. Xbre deviennent par là absolument étrangers à l'affaire.

Il doit rendre la lettre de Change et tous les papiers suivant sa signature.

2° Il m'a fourni depuis des Diamans pour payement de 3000. Ecus, évaluables a valeur intrinséque au poids de carat (a lestimation des jouailliers).

Cinq Jouaillers ⟨qui⟩ les ont estimés (encor) au dessus de leur valeur et il n'y a pas un Jouaillier qui les ⟨prit⟩ (prenne) pour Mille Ecus.

Il m'a donc trompé sur ce second Chef d'environ Deux Mille Ecus.

Pour pallier son delit, il veut confondre cette partie du Procès avec l'autre.

Je lui represente son propre écrit, et le mien du 24. Decembre, il répond qu'il n'a (ecrit) sa promesse ⟨écrit⟩ qu'au bas de la

page (comme si cela s'etoit jamais pratiqué.) et que moi par un tour de faussaire j'ai rempli depuis le haut de la page.

Je demande satisfaction de cette Injure absurde.

Je lui représente ses Diamans qui sont connus de tous les Joualliers il ose nier que ce soïent les siens.

Je le somme de déposer à la Justice, un écrit donné de moy à luy le 27. Decembre contenant le nombre et la nature de ses Diamans écrit très important, et qui doit le confondre, et il dit l'avoir jetté à terre en présence du nommé Picard.

Le nommé Picard fait serment qu'il ne l'a point vû.

Et en effet il n'est pas trop vraisemblable qu'un Juif ait jetté un Billet où il s'agit de 3000. Ecus.

Ce Juif joint a tant de fraudes l'insolence de publier que le Roy le protège.

Le Roy ne protège que la Justice.

2

A folio sheet (23 × 18.5 cm.) written on the first and fourth pages. A holograph letter to Cocceji, probably written on Sunday, 10 January 1751, and intended as the covering letter accompanying a packet of papers relating to the case. A postscript written the following day on the back refers to an error made by Voltaire's secretary in not enclosing the correct letter. First printed by Stevenson (facing p.284) and again as Best.3764.

3

A folio sheet (34 × 21 cm.) written on the first page. A Latin document, written in the first person, containing Voltaire's sworn evidence regarding his suit. Printed in Stevenson, pp.287-288. 2*v* has a note in a different hand: 'No. 64 / lettres de Voltaire touchant son Process et quelque pieces du Process.'

4

A folio sheet (23 × 18.5 cm.) written on the first leaf. A holograph letter from Voltaire to Cocceji dated Wednesday, and

supposed by Stevenson (p.287) to be 13 January 1751. Referred to as Best.3766, though the text was then not available. This letter relates to the accusation of forgery that was levelled at Voltaire after Hirschel had denied the authenticity of a document dated 19 December (1750).[6]

Monseigneur ce mercredy au soir

je ne peux m'empecher dans l'horreur ou je suis de dire à VE. qu'il n'y a pas de milieu. Si le billet du 19 decembre n'est pas datté aprouvé signé de la main du juif, je suis un faussaire un scelerat punissable. je ne crois pas qu'il y ait rien au monde de plus visible que son parjure. je m'en raporte a vos yeux. la ressemblance parfaitte des signatures du juif, la liberté des traits ne sont pas equivoques. je vous suplie de parafer *nevarietur* une piece si importante. le crime de hirshell peut me compromettre dans toutte leurope. trois ecrivains apres tout peuvent se tromper. plus il y en aura, plus le crime sera averé le juif vient dheriter de baucoup d'argent comptant il sait les noms des experts que vous avez nommez il est capable de tout. jugez de luy par le trait d'affirmer qu'il a jetté a terre un billet d'ecus et un billet de 3000 ecus. jugez en par le refus qu'il a fait de reconnaitre ses diamants, par L'imposture reconnue avec la quelle il affirmoit que je luy avois arraché une bague du doit, par Laudace insensée avec la quelle il pretend qu'il a ecrit une obligation au bas d'une page, laissant tout le haut en blanc a la discretion de son adversaire, par l'artifice avec lequel il a fait laisser jusqu'apresent ma lettre de change a paris sachant que je devois y aller, et comptant que je serois obligé de la payer, par le troisieme tireur. a t'on jamais accumulé plus de délits? moy encor une fois accusé du crime de faussaire par un jüif! voyla le cas d'etre un peu vif.

[6] this document, the authorship of which Hirschel disputed, is reproduced by Mangold, no. 17 A, p.38, and in facsimile at the end of the book.

au nom de dieu ayez de luy le plus de signatures qu'il sera possible. voila un des cas des plus singuliers qui soient arrivez sous votre administration pardonnez moy ma juste sensibilité

je suis avec respect

Monseigneur

Votre tres humble et tres obeissant serviteur

Voltaire

5

A folio sheet (19 × 11.5 cm.) written on the first leaf, the address on the fourth page. An undated holograph letter from Voltaire to count Friedrich Rudolf von Rothenburg. Referred to as Best.3787, though the text was again not available.

Ma maladie qui est très cruelle, m'empeche monsieur de venir vous remercier de la bonté qu'a eü votre Excellence de vouloir bien se preter a accomoder mon affaire. Vous sentez que mon honneur ne me permet pas de transiger avec un homme qui me retient frauduleusement une lettre de change depuis deux mois, qui a nié sa propre signature et qui est deja convaincu de plus d'une fausseté. la conduitte dailleurs qu'il a tenüe, son insolence, et ses fourberies meritent bien plutôt un chatiment exemplaire qu'un accomodement. je m'en raporte a la noblesse de votre ame. je serois indigne de vos bontez si je paraissois mollir dans cette occasion et j'en serois encor plus indigne si je ne conservois pas pour vous toutte ma vie le plus tendre et le plus respectueux attachement

Volt.

A Son Excellence
monsieur le general comte de
Rothenbourg etc.

In addition to these five documents referred to by Stevenson there may be added a further three that he did not describe.

6

A single sheet (23 × 18.5 cm.) written by Voltaire on the first page.

extrait des registres de la chancellerie

Le procez pour le quel abrahame hirshell négociant juif de cette ville de Berlin est en cause, a pour fondement une restitution de dix mille ecus de lettres de change, en vertu dela quelle il a eté arreté le 2 janvier et donné caution, et une partie de trois milles ecus de Diamans dont le demandeur a exigé l'estimation; en foy de quoi j'ay signé, a la requete du demandeur le present certificat pour servir en tant que besoin est.

At the foot of this document, in a different hand and deleted, there are the words 'Comme l'affaire n'est pas encor decidée'. The writing appears to be the same as that of text 9 below and is probably that of Cocceji's own hand.

7

A single sheet (24 × 19 cm.) written on the first page. A receipt for the jewels which Voltaire received from Hirschel, followed by a note in German. The entire document is in Hirschel's hand. It is probably referred to by Cocceji in text 9 and was used in comparing the handwriting with that of the disputed document of 19 December. There are a number of underlinings of words, letters and numbers in red (*e.g.* Decembre, 1750, son secretaire, 1150, Bague, etc.) which are probably the handwriting expert's marks identifying characteristic features, which Cocceji's notes confirm as establishing that Hirschel was indeed the author of the statement dated 19th Dec.

je déclare avoir taxé le 16 Decembre 1750 les articles suivant à monsieur de Voltaire lesquells il m'a envoyé par son secretaire monsieur Tinois a 3 heures après diné

un grand noeud	1150
un dite	850
une ditte sur sa croix avec rubis composition	220
une Bague entouré	320
une ditte en topasse orientale	350
cela fait	2890

à Berlin ce 4 janvier 1751.

Es wahr noch Eine Schleiffe welche er nicht taxirt hat

In der Breiten Strasse

8

Three folio sheets (35 × 21 cm.) Sheet 1 serves as an outer cover for the other two. Written on 1*r* is the heading 'Briefschafften den Proces des M. von Voltaire gegen den Juden Hirschl betreffend.' This is followed by a note by G. F. von Tempsky[7]. 2*r* is treated as a separate text (text 9).

Sheet II written 1*r*, *v*. Sheet III written 1*r*-2*r*. Sheets II and III have a wide (9-10 cm.) margin on the left and 11-12 cm. of text. Some marginal additions were made apparently in the course of writing; two more extensive ones appear to have been added as an afterthought in larger writing and with a softer pen. It is in slipshod but not illegible Gothic script, with names and the frequent French forms in Latin letters (these are reproduced below in italics.) The style is uncultivated, even illiterate, collapsing on several occasions into plainly ungrammatical formulations. From the general appearance one might have supposed this to be a first draft, yet the evidence of its origin among Cocceji's private papers clearly suggests that it was in fact an affidavit presented by Hirschel to the court.

[7] the note reads as follows: 'Handed down to me by my father Louis von Tempsky Lieut Colonel retired. Liegnitz Silesia. His grandfather on the side of his mother was the Great Chancellor Cocceji under Frederic the Great. from (him) Cocceji's papers have this autographs of Voltaire been selected.

G. F. von Tempsky
17 Buckingham Terrace
Glasgow
April 23. 1858

The only editorial attempt to normalize the author's shortcomings is as follows: alteration of capital or small initial letters, which were used quite indiscriminately; change (usually addition) of punctuation to facilitate understanding; joining of unnecessarily separated word-elements; rectification of obviously faulty declension-endings. There seemed to be little point in impeding the understanding by reproducing all the writer's insufficiencies. Editorial additions are set within square brackets; where these take the form of editorial comment they are in italics. Deletions in the original are set within angular brackets; editorial deletion of a superfluous word is set thus: [〈 〉].

Spece facte

Den 22^{n} 9*bre a.p.* schickte der Cammerherr von *Voltaire* nach mich, und machte mir das Maul süsse, dass [ich] mein Glück durch Ihn machen solle, *persuadir*te mich endlich, nach Dressden zu reissen, um vor sein *Comto* Steuerscheine aufzukauffen mit 35 *p.c.* Verlust; [*in margin* sub. A] schrieb mir auch ein klein *Billet* sub. A. um mich zu erkundigen, ob noch Zeit wäre, solche auf bürgerlichen Nahmen zu *declarir*en. Wir machten *Conventions* schrifftlich, und unterschrieben beÿde unseren Nahmen, welches er zur seiner [*inserted*] Versichrung behielte, [*in margin* s. B.] und gab mir ein[en] Schein, welchen wir gleichfals beÿde unterschrieben, nehmlich, dass ich für 40000 *Li.* Wechselbrieffe von ihm [*over* 〈sich〉] selbst aussgestellet 〈soll ver*negotir*en〉 auf Pariss soll ver*negotir*en, nach damahligem *Cours* für 300 *Livers* 75 Th. gerechnet, solche ich hier auch an ein[en] *Banquier Platzmann*, à 75 *negotir*te. Weillen aber dem *Banquier* die Post in einem Wechsel *incomodir*te in seiner *negotie*, so fürte denselben beÿ *Voltair*, welcher den Wechselbrieff in kleinere Brieffe beÿ Gegenwärts des *Banquiers devisir*te, solche ich auch ver*negotir*te. Allein den andern Morgen schickte mir der Käuffer des Wechsels die Brieffe wieder zurücke und liesse mir sagen, er träge Bedencken, solche Wechselbrieffe zu handeln. Ich schickte sofort

mit der ersten Post mit *Consentionen* des *Voltairs* die Wechsel nach Leipzig an einen *Correspondenten H. Hohmann*, welcher mir dass Gelde gleich nach Dressden schickte; mehr zu ersehen ⟨ist⟩ in *Billet* s. B. dass ich an *Voltair* sowohl von der obigen *Some* 40000 *Livers*, alss auch ein Wechsel *Th 4430 *Capital* mit *Intresse* gerechnet* [**marginal insertion*] auf mein[en] Vatter zahlbahr ⟨den 14 X*bre*⟩ 21^en^ *Mar. a.c.* den 14^en^ X*bre. a.p.* Rechenschafft von beÿden *Somes* zu geben. // Darauff reisete ich nach Dressden und bekame aber [aber *inserted*] keine Scheine vor dem Preiss, ⟨musste also⟩ wahr auch den 13^en^ schon wider zurück abgeredemassen, schickte beÿ meiner Ankunfft meinen Bedienten nach *Potsdam* um ihn zu melden meine Ankunfft ohne Steuerscheine, so schickte er mir d. *Billet* s. C. zu Antworth, dass ich meine Fehler verbessern soll und ihm noch welche verschaffen. Nun bitte ich vor allen Dingen, dass er die unter uns geschlossnen *Conventions* zeige, nehmlich wie das *Billet* s. B., und hernach alle die veruhrsachten Reiseunkosten, Versäumnisse und Verlust des Wechsels, wegen dem *Prot*[*e*]*st* welcher bereits den 12^en^ geschehen ist [ist *inserted*] in *Paris*. Noch [Noch, *inserted*], was an meinem [meinem *inserted*] *Credit* Schaden thut, dass Wechsel wo mein *indossement* darauff stehet, sollen *protestir*et werden, es ist wahrscheinlich, das mann kein[em] Unbekanten so leicht wirt Wechsel von 40000 *Liv.* ohne Gegenschein anvertrauen, und solange er dieses nicht *prodecir*et, ich die 40000 *L.* zu fordern hab. Nun kan man sehen wie *Mons. Voltair* mich ⟨*illegible deletion*⟩ *reuinir*en wolte. Laut *Billet* s. B. solte ich Rechenschafft geben des Geldes. Den 14^en^ und den 12^en^ vorher [vorher *inserted*] wahren schon die Wechsels in *Paris protestir*et, anstat dass *Voltair* schreiben soll nach *Paris*, um die Wechsel zu *axceptir*en, so schrieb er nicht zu *axceptir*en, die Uhr[sache] ich verlange zu wissen. Der *Protest* folget hierbeÿ sub. D. Ich verwarthe auch alle Tage die Wechselbrieffe mit *Protest* der Zahlung von der Verfallzeit und Rechnung von allen Unkosten. [**Subsequent marginal insertion*]* Man *consederire* wenn ich dass Unglük gehabt hatte, Steuerschein[e] zu kauffen, und der Wechsel mit

Protest wiedergekommen war, so hatte [ich] mussen *banqueroute* machen.* Bitte mir darauf *Caution* zu machen sowohl auf alle Unkosten alss auf [⟨auf⟩] die Jubellen, die er mir im Königl. Schlosse hat mit Gewald abgenommen, wie folget. //

Des Jubellenhandels

Vo[*l*]*taire* spielte *T*[*r*]*agedie* in *Potsdam* und schrieb ⟨mir⟩ an meinen Bruder ein *Billet* s. E., die Jubelen zu bringen. Mein Bruder brachte ihm zweÿ Schleuffen, solche hat die gantze Welt beÿ ihm gesehn tragen, bald auf seinem Creutz bald auf seiner *Charpe* in der *Tragedie*, und versicherte⟨s⟩ mein[em] Bruder, sobald ich nur würde zurücke sein, er mit mir wegen der Jubellen den Handel schlüsse. Darinn allein hat er sein Worth gehalten, und den 16 *perfecte* mir mit den Handel gemacht laut der *Taxe* von *Reclam*

nehmlich eine Schleiffe à	Th 1150
eine dito	850
ein Ring	320
ein Dito mit ein[em] *argentin Topas* und *Br*[il-lan]ten	350
ein *Flacon*	16 : 12 gr.
eine kleine Schleiffe zum Creutz welche schon längst von ihm bestellt wahr	190
	2876 : 12

Darauf gab er mir an Bezahlung den Schein [*over* ⟨Wechsel⟩] von meinem Vatter von Th 4430 *Cap.* u. *int.* zahlbahr den 21 Marz s. F. ⟨. . . . . wäg. . . . . 12 . . . der *Interesse* weil er noch nicht fällig ist⟩ ⟨. . . . . noch nicht zahl⟩ [*three and a half lines—two attempted versions—largely illegibly deleted*] und rechnete meinem Vatter alss Th 103 : 12 von der *intresse* zurücke weillen der Wechsel noch nicht fällig wahr.

Rechnung Jubellen	Th 2876 : 12 gr.
gehet ab von der *intresse*	103 : 12
und Baargelde gabe ich ihm heraus	1450
	Th 4430

Also hatte der Handel seine Richtigkeit und ⟨*illegible deletion*⟩ wir gaben uns auch einander *quittancen* s. G. Wan nun sein[er] Vorgabe nach, der Handel noch nicht geschlossen wäre, vorher würde ich ihm Baargeld gegeben haben, und er mir *quitir*et dass er es alles b[ekommen hätte?] ⟨Ich gab ihm auch⟩ Ich habe ihm auch versprochen, die alten *Louis d'ors* mit *Friderichs d'ors* zu vertauschen. Den 17ten darauf sagte er, er wolte den Ring mit dem *Topas* nicht haben und wolte lieber was anders haben. Darauf nahme ich aus gutten Willen den *Topas* zurücke, gab ihm

ein[en] Ring mit ein[em] *Portrait* des Königs à	Th	450
ein dito von *Brill*[anten] *quarée*		350
* um einen davon auszusuchen [* *marginal addition*]		
und gab ihm ein[en] Schein laut *Copia* sub. H. Ich habe		
auch gesagt, dass [ich] *meuble* zu verkauffen hätte, so		
schickt er beÿ mich den 25ten früh das *Billet* s. J., ich		
solte ihm schicken mein *meuble* und ein[en] schönen		
Granat an sein Creutz zu machen. Wan nun solche		
Jubellen nicht richtig [richtig *inserted*] behandelt wä-		
ren, ⟨dan⟩ würde er nicht geschrieben haben [haben		
inserted] an mein Creutz; da ich ihm solchen *Granat*		
*mit *Brill*[anten] [**marginal addition*] brachte, à	Th	110
und machte mein[en] *Baguie*[r] auf, nahm er noch		
ein[en] Ring mit einem *Brill*[anten] Hertz *carmesirt* à		350
ein dito [mit] gelben *Brill*[anten] *car*[mesirt]		100
Zusammen machte es	Th	1360

[*Subsequent marginal addition*] Hielte mich auff damit. Endlich kam der Baron *Le Fort* darauff. Da sagte er noch zu ihm, ich will hier ein[en] Ring kauffen, und machte allerhand Umstanden bis ich endlich fort ginge.

Er nahm diese Jubellen und stellte mich ab biss Sontag. Sontag ging ich zu ihm, kante aber mit ihm nicht färtig werden, so schrieb ich ihn Montag den 28^{en}, ich werde meine Ringe nicht wider nehmen, und schickte mein[en] Bruder zu ihm. Er liess mir sagen, er wolte ein[en] *troque* mit mir machen gegen was anders, und ich solte ihm ein[en] Spiegel schicken und beÿ ihm kommen, welches auch geschahe. Er liess mich nicht in seine Cammer kommen, sondern mit einander im *Sale*, wo sein Bedienter *Picard* zugegen war. Er nahm [nahm *inserted*] den Spiegel und setzte [ihn] in der Kammer, und [nahm] mir noch ein[en] Ring mit Gewalt von meinem Finger à 350, und sagte zu mir, *aller vous en vous plaindre où vous vouler*, und stiess mich zur Tühr raus. Ich sagte zum Bedienten, er soll Zeuge sein, dass sein H[err] mir ein[en] Ring mit Gewalt nimt.

Die Ringe machen	Th 1360
und nun den letzten	350
	Th 1710
Davon gehet ab der Topass	350
solche *restir*ung	1360

*presentir*e mir gegen *Execution* aus⟨zahlen⟩ zu zahlen, indehme ich solche schöne Wahren hatte ohnefehlbahr gegen die Feuertäge abgesetzet.

9

An investigator, probably Cocceji himself, has made notes of his findings relating to the charge of forgery levelled at Voltaire by Hirschel. The text is a comparison of various features of the handwriting on the document of 19 December 1750 with that of other documents also written by Hirschel, including text 7 above. These other documents are as follows: (a) 24 November: a receipt for the 'billet de change' in the hand of Hirschel. See Mangold,

No. 15 B, p.21. (b) 24 December: another signed receipt by Hirschel. See Mangold, 16 D. p.36, also reproduced in a facsimile copy at the end of the book. (c) 4 January: see text 7 printed above. (d) 16 December: the 'Quittance générale': see Mangold, 2 A, pp.5-6.

Der Herr Schreibmeister ⟨*Scherer*⟩

Comparatio literarum

⟨*Berlin ce* 19⟩ *Decembre* 1750 komt *accurat* mit des Juden Hand unterm 4 *Jan* überein *item* d. 24 *Nov* 24 *Dec*
Das *B Berlin ce* komt mit des Juden Hand vom 4 *Jan item* vom 24 *Dec item* vom 24 *Nov*.
1750 mit dem *billet* vom 24 *Nov* 1750
⟨19⟩ mit dem *billet* vom 24
2940 das 2 und 9 [*inserted above the line*] mit dem *billet* vom 4 *Jan*.
das 9 noch mit dem *billet* eigner unterschrift
das 4 *itidem*

Das S von *Hirschel* 24 *Dec* [24 *Dec inserted*] Dec. 4 *Jan*. 16 *Dec*. 4mahl die 4 Dec [*this is not the date of a document; the 4 and Dec. are selected features of Hirschel's handwriting*.] vom 24 *Nov*

Den 16 *Dec quittance general tout paye*
und dass er den Wechselbrief wider liefern wolte freylich da er gewust dass der Wechsel *protestirt* war und *billet* des *Volt*.

àprouvè

à Er pflegt allezeit einen *accent* auf das *à* zu machen 24 *Dec*
p es findet sich dergleiche Buchstabe nicht
r
o
u
v
è

A Provisional bibliography of Scandinavian and Finnish editions and translations of Voltaire

by Theodore Besterman

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Preface

This is a further instalment of a projected survey of Voltaire editions and translations printed out of France. The English editions were listed by H. B. Evans in vol.viii of the *Studies* (1959) and the Italian ones by myself in vol.xviii (1961).

The present list is also limited to separately published works. However many copies of a book have been seen, not more than three locations are given. The collations represent the most perfect copies seen or ideally reconstituted from those examined.

The following abbreviations have been used in referring to libraries:

Århus, Statsbibliotek
Copenhagen, Kongelige bibliotek
Göteborg, Universitetsbibliotek
Helsinki, Yliopisto kirjaston
IMV, Institut et musée Voltaire
Lund, Universitetsbibliotek
Oslo, Universitetsbibliotek
Stockholm, Kungliga bibliotek
Upsala, Universitetsbibliotek

I am grateful to the directors of these libraries for the much appreciated facilities they so generously provided. It is my earnest hope that Scandinavian scholars will now correct and complete this preliminary survey.

Th. B.

Selections

1 Overſettelſer / Af / Zadig, / en østlig Historie; / Og af / nogle andre ſmaae Stykker, / Om de Uleiligheder ſom følge med / Videnſkaber; Om Stilen; Om Frihed / til at skrive; Om det gode ſom man kunde / giøre og ikke giør; Om Titler, / Og om Æere. / Alle af Herr Voltaire. / [*typographic ornament*] / Sorøe 1769. / [*typographic ornament*] / Trykt hos Jonas Lindgren, det / Ridderl. Acad. Bogtrykker. /

pp.[vi].184; sig.)(⁴, A2-L⁸, M⁴; cm.20 × 13 ½.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

2 Voltaires Domme / om / Religion og Bibel. / tilligemed / hans Levnet ved Condorcet. / [*rule*] / Overſatte / ved / O. Horrebow. / [*ornamental rule*] / Første Deel. / [*ornamental rule*] / Si la raison nous luit, qu'avons nous nous a plaindre / Nous n'avons qu'un flambeau, gardons nous de l'eteindre. / *Voltaire.* / [*ornamental rule*] / Kjøbenhavn, 1798. / Trykt paa A. Soldins Forlag. / hos Sebaſtian Popp. /

pp.xii.[iii].[i blank].454.[ii blank]; sig.*, A-Ee⁸, Ff⁴; cm.18½.

no more published.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Oslo]

3 Voltaires Levnet, / tilligemed / hans Domme over Religion og Bibel, / af / Condorcet. / [*swell rule*] / Overſat / ved / O. Horrebow. / [*swell rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1802. / Trykt paa Boghandler A. Soldins Forlag / hos Boas Bruennich. /

pp.xii.[iii].[i blank].454.[ii blank]; sig.*, A-Ee⁸, Ff⁴; cm.16¾.

[Oslo]

4 De store filosofer. . . . Voltaire. Utvalg og innledning ved André Maurois. Oversatt av Sverre Holm. Gyldendal norsk vorlag. . . . Oslo 1939.

pp.179; cm.19½.

[Oslo]

5 Voltaires udødelige Tanker i udtog ved og med Indlening af André Maurois. . . . Martins Forlag, København 1939.

pp.191; cm.18½.

translated by Kai Friis Moller.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

6 Voltaire i utval av André Maurois. Från franskan av Göran Salander. Albert Bonniers förlag. Stockholm. [1942].

pp.215; cm.19.

[Lund
Stockholm]

7 Voltaire. Tankar om kriget. . . . Saul och David. Drâma. Inledning och översättning av G. Åman-Nilsson. Stockholm. . . . Bokförlaget Natur och kultur. [1944].

pp.88; cm.20½.

the Tankar *are taken from various works; the play is* Saül.

[Lund
Göteborg
Stockholm]

8 François-Marie Voltaire. Fornufts-Potpourri. Filosofiske Smaaskildringer. Oversat og indledet af Leif Nedergaard. . . . København, Steen Hasselbachs Forlag, MCMXLVI.

pp.61; cm.18.

half-title: Hasselbachs kultur-bibliotek . . . bind LVII.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Lund]

9 Så er sagt. . . . Historiske og litterære dokumenter. . . . Redigert ved Nic. Stang. 10. Utvalg av Voltaire og Rousseau av Gotfr. Schultz og Edvard Stang. Oslo 1946. . . . Forlagt av Johan Grundt Tanum.

pp.39; cm.18½.

[Oslo]

10 Udvalgte Skrifter af Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot. Et kommenteret udvalg af de franske oplysningskribrenter ved Leif Nedergaard. . . . H. Hagerup's Forlag, København 1956.

pp.139; cm.20½.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

Collected stories

11 Mästerverk ur världslitteraturen. 9. . . . Candide, filosofiska romaner och dialoger af Voltaire. . . . Candide. — Naturens son. — Lord Chesterfields öron. — Grefve Boulainvilliers' middag. — Historien om en hederlig bramin. . . . Ofversättning. . . . Med en inledning af David Sprengel. Stockholm, Albert Bonniers förlag. [1907].

pp.iii-xxxvii.296; cm.18; frontispiece portrait.
reprinted in 1915 as a so-called 'andra upplagan'.

[Århus
Göteborg
Lund]

12 Voltaire. . . . Filosofiske romaner i översättning av David Sprengel. Världen som den är, Baboucs syn. — Den enögde bäraren. — Cosi-sancta eller ett litet ont för ett stort gott. — Memnon eller den mänskliga visheten. — Bababec och fakirerna. — Micromegas. — De båda tröstade. — Scarmentados resor. — Platons dröm. — Historien om en hederlig bramin. — Det vita och det svarta. — Jeannot och Colin. — Pot-pourri. — Indisk händelse. — De blinda om färgerna. — Mannen med fyrtio écus. — Minnets äventyr. — Förnuftets lov. Med en studie över filosofpropagandan i Frankrike på 1700-talet och Voltaire av H. Taine, samt noter och anmärkningan av översättaran. Stockholm, Björck & Börjesson. [1922].

pp.[ii].xv.298; cm.21½; frontispiece portrait.
on cover: Berömder filosofer XIX.

[Århus
Göteborg
Oslo]

13 Voltaires bedste muntre historier i Udvalg ved Leif Nedergaard. Illustreret af Lars Bo. . . . Carit Andersens Forlag. [Copenhagen 1959].

pp.312; cm.22¼.
translated by Leif Nedergaard, except for Candide, *translated by Karen Nyrop Christensen.*

[Århus
Copenhagen]

Collected plays

14 THEATRE ROYAL / *DE DANNEMARC*, / OU / RECUEIL / DES MEILLEURES PIECES / DRAMATIQUES FRANÇOISES, / *Repréſentées ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, depuis* / 1766 *à* 1769. / [*rule*] / OEUVRES CHOISIES DE THEATRE / DE MR. DE VOLTAIRE. / *TOME I* ⟨*II; III*⟩. / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXX ⟨M DCC LXX; M DCC LXXIII⟩. / Avec Permiſſion du Roi. /

these are collective titlepages with which nos. 17, 18, 63, 86, 94, 99, 108, 111, 113, 124, 125, 128, 150 were reissued.

[Copenhagen]

15 THÉATRE / DE VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / TOME PREMIER ⟨SECOND; TROISIÈME⟩. / [*rule*] / *Avec Privilége du Roi.* / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / DE L'IMPRIMERIE D'OLAVE GRAHN, / L'AN 1816. /

pp.[iii].[i blank].287 [*sic* for 305].[ii].[i blank]+[iii].[i blank].336.[i].[i blank]+[ii].364; sig.[ ]^{2}, 1-19^{8}, 20^{2}+[ ]^{2}, 1-20^{8}, 21^{9}+[ ]^{2}, 1-23^{8}, 24^{2}; cm.19¼ [uncut].

half-title: BIBLIOTHÈQUE / DES / AUTEURS CLASSIQUES / FRANÇAIS. / [*rule*] / TOME TRENTE-TROISIÈME ⟨-CINQUIÈME⟩ / . . . .

vol.i contains Œdipe, Artémire, Mariamne, L'Indiscret; *vol.ii:* Brutus, Eryphile, Zaïre, Samson; *vol.iii:* Adelaïde du Guesclin, La Mort de César, Tanis et Zélide, Alzire, L'Enfant prodigue.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

16 Udvalgte Gjeſter: / Zaire. Merope. Alzire. / Efter Voltaire, / ved / H. v. Buchwald. / [*swell rule*] / Kjøbenhavn. / Trykt hos J. D. Qvist, i det Chriſtenſenſkte Officin. / 1832. /

pp.[viii].247.[i blank]; sig.[ ]^{4}, 1-15^{8}, 16^{4}; cm.17½.

dedicated to the king; the translator's full name is Johann Heinrich von Buchwald.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Oslo]

Individual works

Adelaïde du Guesclin

17 ADELAIDE / DU GUESCLIN, / *TRAGÉDIE,* / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / *Jouée en* 1734. *& repriſe en* 1765. / *Repréſentée ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, par / les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, / le* 1769. / Suivant la nouvelle édition in 4°. 1768. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE,* / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXIX. / *Avec Permiſſion du Roi.* /

pp.77.[iii]; sig.A-E^{8}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.i of no.14; the blank appears as shown.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

Alzire

18 ALZIRE, / OU LES / AMÉRICAINS, / *TRAGÉDIE*, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / *Repréſentée ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, par / les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, / le* 1769. / Suivant la nouvelle édition in 4°. 1768. / [*typographic ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXIX. / *Avec Permiſſion du Roi.* /

pp.79.[i blank]; sig.A-E^{8}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.i of no.14; the blank appears as shown.

[Copenhagen]

19 Alzire / eller / Amerikanerne / [*rule*] / Sørgeſpil / i / Fem Optog / af / Herr Voltaire. / Overſat / af / Th. Stockfleth. / Efter den femte Dresdenſke Udgave 1748, og de / af Forfatteren ſenere giorte Forandringer, som han / har overſendt de Pariſiſke Skuespillere. / [*double rule*] /

pp.[133]-[248]; sig.[J3]-[Q5]; cm.19¾.

forms part of the Forsøg / i de / ſkiønne og nyttige / Videnſkaber / ſamlede / ved / et patriotiſk Selſkab. / [*rule*] / Tiende Stykke. / [*double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, trykt hos Nicolaus Møller, / Kongl. Hof-Bogtrykker. / 1772. /

the ninth and tenth parts of the series also form the 'Femte Bind', dated 1771.

[Copenhagen]

20 Alzire / eller / Amerikanerne. / [*rule*] / Sørgeſpil / i / Fem Optog / af / Herr Voltaire. / Overſat / af / Th. Stockfleth. / Efter dem femte Dresdenſke Udgave 1748, og de / af Forfatteren ſenere giorte Forandringer, som han / har overſendt de Pariſiſke Skuespillere. / [*double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1773. / Trykt hos Hofbogtrykker Nicolaus Møller. /

pp.104; sig.A^{6}, B-F^{8}, G^{6}; cm.17.

[Oslo]

21 ALZIR, / ELLER / AMERIKANERNE. / TRAGEDIE. / [*rule*] / *OeFVERSAeTTNING.* / [*rule*] / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt i Kongl. Finska Bocktryckeriet. / hos JOHAN A. CARLBOHM, 1778. /

pp.[ii].66; sig.A-D^{8}, E^{1}; cm.21¾ [uncut].

[Lund
Stockholm]

22 Alzire / eller / Americanerne. / [*double rule*] / Tragedie i fem Acter / af / Voltaire. / Fordansket / af H. v. B. / [*swell rule*] / Kiel, / trykt hos C. F. Mohr. / 1832. /

pp.[ii blank].vi.73.[iii blank]; sig. [ ]⁴, 1-4⁸, 5⁶; cm.13½ [uncut].

the translator was Johann Heinrich von Buchwald.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

L'Anti-Machiavel

23 ANTI-MACHIAVEL, / OU / ESSAI DE CRITIQVE / SUR LE / PRINCE / DE / MACHIAVEL, / PUBLIE' PAR Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / [*engraved monogram*] / *A COPENHAGUE.* / Aux dépens de JAQUES PREUSS / M DCC. XL. /

pp.xv.[i].214.[i].[i blank]; sig.*, A-N⁸, O⁴; cm.19¼.

the titlepage is printed in red and black.

[Århus
IMV]

Brutus

24 BRUTUS / Sorge=Spehl, / Skrefwen / Uti / Fem Afhandlingar / Utaf Herr VOLTAIRE, / Defwerſat utur Franſoeſkan, / Och / Fooreſtaeld paa Swenska Theatren i Stockholm / aahr 1739. i Martii Maanad / [*double rule*] / STOCKHOLM, Tryckt uti thet Kongl. Tryckeriet. / Hos Directeuren Pet. Momma / 1739. /

pp.79. [i blank]; sig.A-M⁴; cm.21 ¾.

[Lund
Stockholm]

25 BRUTUS. / [*typographic ornament*] / Tragedi i Fem Akter. / efter Voltaire. / [*typographic ornament*] / AF / Joh. Henr. Thomander. / [*ornament*] / LUND, tryckt hos Lundberg & Lönnegren, / [*typographic ornament*] / 1831. /

pp.68; sig.(A)-(D)⁸, (E)²; cm.20½ [uncut].

[Lund]

Candide

26 CANDIDUS / Eller / Alt til det Baeſta. / [*ornamental double rule* / Defwerſaettning / Af Engelskan. / [*rule*] / *Le plus grand ignorant, le plus grand / Philoſophe, / Tout bien consideres, ſont de la meme etoffe.* /

Destouches. / [*vignette*] / [*ornamental triple rule*] / WESTERÅS, / Tryckt hos JOHAN LAUR. HORRN, på / dess bekostnad, 1783. /

pp.[viii].140.[iv]; sig.)(⁴, A-H⁸, I-K⁴; cm.17½.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

27 Candide / eller / den bedste Verden / af Voltaire. / [*ornamental rule*] / Oversat af det Franske. / [*ornamental double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn. 1797. / Trykt hos Zacharias Breum. /

pp.[ii].192.195-208; sig.[ ]¹, A-M⁸, N⁷; cm.16¾.

a uniform edition of the 'anden deel' was issued in the same year.

[Copenhagen]

28 «Christiansens Miniaturbibliothek». . . . Voltaire. Candide eller den bedste Verden. Oversat of Fru Clara Levy. . . . A. Christiansens Forlag, København-Kristiania. MDCCCC.

pp.163; cm.14¼; portrait frontispiece.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

29 Voltaire. Candide eli avosydämisen ja vilpittömän nuoren miehen ihmeelliset seikkailut. Suomentanut L. Onerva. . . . Helsinki, Kustannusosakeyhtiö kirja. [1914].

pp.111+113-205.[ii]; cm.17¾.

forms Kirjan 50 p:n kirjasto, *nos.9-10.*

[Helsinki]

30 Voltaire: Candide. Oversat af Georg Saxild. . . . København, Levin & Munksgaards Forlag 1917.

pp.152; cm.18¾.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

31 Voltaire. Candide eller optimismen. Översättning av David Sprengel. Med akvareller och teckningar av Kurt Jungstedt. Stockholm, Albert Bonniers förlag. [1925].

pp.124; cm.26.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

32 Franska sjuttonhundratals-romaner. Abbé Prévost, Manon Lescaut. Voltaire, Candide och naturens son. . . . Stockholm, Albert Bonniers förlag. [1927].

pp.437; cm.18¼.

this is vol.25 of Världs litteraturen.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

33 GBNF. Voltaire, Candide. Rousseau, Bekendelser. Udgivet af . . . A. Blinkenberg. Gyldendalske boghandel . . . [Århus printed] 1928-1930.

pp.3-346; cm.20½; with portraits.

additional titlepage: Gyldendal's bibliotek . . . bind 15; *both titlepages are printed in red and black.*

[Århus
Göteborg
Lund]

34 Voltaire. Candide. Pa norsk ved Charles Kent. . . . Oslo 1930. Forlagt av H. Aschehoug & co. (W. Nygaard).

pp.174; cm.18¾.

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

35 Voltaire. Candide eller den bedste Verden. Tegninger af Arne Ungermann. Nyt Nordisk Forlag. Arnold Busck. Kjøbenhavn MCMXL.

pp.142; cm.27½.

the translation is by Clara Levy.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

36 Voltaire. Candide eller optimismen. Forum. [Helsingfors 1944].

pp.3-186; cm.19½.

on half-title: Forumbiblioteket. 7; *the translation is that by David Sprengel.*

[Stockholm
Upsala]

37 Birtíngur. Eftir Voltaire. Snarað hefur Halldór Kiljan Laxness. . . . Bókasafn Helgafells. . . . Unuhúsi, Garðastræti 15-17, Reykjavík 1945.

pp.3-216; cm.20½; illustrated.

additional titlepage: Listmannaþing II.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

38 Voltaire. Candide. . . . John Griegs forlag. [Boken er oversatt fra fransk av Herbrand Lavik. Tegningene og akvarallene er av Per Schwab. . . . Bergen 1945].

pp.176; cm.22¼; illustrated.

[Oslo]

39 François Voltaire. Candide. Oversat af Georg Saxild. . . . Aschehoug Dansk Forlag . . . [Copenhagen] 1946.

pp.163; cm.18½.

half-title: Levende Litteratur *[4]*.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

40 Jean François Marie Arouet de Voltaire. Candide eller optimismen. Oversatt av Paul Gauguin. . . . Med tegninger av Chrix Dahl. . . . F. Bruns bokhandels forlag. Trondhiem 1946.

pp.3-168; cm.25¾; illustrated.

[Oslo]

41 Voltaire. Candide. . . . Illustrations de A. Hallmann. . . . Jan Förlag, Stockholm. [1946].

pp.168; cm.22½.

contains the same illustrations as no.38; the titlepage is printed in red and black; reissued in 1949.

[Århus
Lund
Stockholm]

42 Voltaire. Candide. Jan Förlag, Stockholm. [1947].

pp.3-147; cm.23¼.

the translation is by Olof Rabenius; contains the same illustrations as no.38; the titlepage is printed in red and black.

[Copenhagen
Göteborg
Lund]

43 Voltērs Kandids. . . . Parnass. [Generālpārstāvis Wegastiftelsens förlag . . . Stockholm 1949].

pp.160; cm.19½.

the translation is by Veronika Strēlerte.

[Stockholm]

44 Voltaire. Candide. Suomentanut J. A. Hollo. . . . Kustannusosakeyhtiö tammi, Helsinki. [1953].

pp.xi.156.[vi]; cm.19¼ [uncut].

on half-title: Elävä maa ilmankirjallisuus, *no.1*.

[Helsinki]

45 Voltaire. Candide eller Optimismen. 200-åars-udgaven i ny kommenteret oversættelse ved Leif Nedergaard. Tilligemed en fuldstændig fordanskning af den anonyme fortsættelse, Candide 2den del, og et referat af en yderligere fortsættelse: Candide i Danmark, der begge lader Candide finde et nyt eldorado i Danmark. Illustreret med gengivelser af samtidige kobberstik. Martins Forlag. . . . København 1959.

pp.206; cm.19¼.

[Århus
Copenhagen
IMV]

46 François Voltaire. Candide eller optimismen. Forum. [Stockholm 1959].

pp.138; cm.18¾.

half-title: Forumsbiblioteket 7; *the translation is by David Sprengel.*

[Göteborg
IMV
Upsala]

47 François-Marie de Voltaire. Candide eller Optimismen. Oversat og indledt af Karen Nyrop Christensen. Tegninger af Lars Bo. Selskabet Bogvennerne 1960.

pp.166; cm.25.

contains also the apocryphal second part.

[Göteborg
Oslo]

48 — [another issue, identical except for the imprint: Carit Andersens forlag 1960].

both publishers are in Copenhagen.

[Århus]

49 Voltaire. Candide. Sohlmans förlag AB, Stockholm. [1961].

pp.221; cm16.½.

half-title: Sohlmans klassikerbibliotek; *the translation is by Ingegerd Granlund.*

[Göteborg
Upsala]

Ce qui plaît aux dames

50 Qwinno=Lynnet / Eller / Hwad ſom maeſt behagar Fruentimren. / En Saga / Paᵉ Vers, / Tagen utaf / Herr / VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / Et petitur cui qvam per tanta pericula conjux? *Ovid.* / [*rule*] / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt uti Kongl. Tryckeriet, 1765. /

pp.20; sig.A-B⁴, C²; cm.23 [uncut].

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

51 Hvad som mest behagar / Damerna. / [*rule*] / *Fée-Saga* / af / VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / Fri Öfversättning / af / J. M. STJERNSTOLPE. / [*double rule*] / STOCKHOLM, 1817. / Tryckt hos Direc. Henrik A. Nordström. /

pp.30.[ii blank]; sig. [A]-B⁸; cm. 20½.

[Copenhagen
Lund
Stockholm]

52 Hvad som mest behagar / Damerna. / [*rule*] / *Fée-Saga* / af / VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / Fri Öfversättning / af / J. M. STJERNSTOLPE. / [*rule*] / Andra Upplagan. / [*double rule*] / STOCKHOLM, 1832. / Tryckt hos Direct. HENRIK. A. NORDSTRÖM. /

pp.30.[ii]; sig.A-B⁸; cm.22¼ [uncut].

[Göteborg
Stockholm
Upsala]

Dialogues d'Evhémère

53 Voltaire. Samtal mellan Euhemeros och Kallikrates. Dialoger om gudomen, universum och människan. Inledning och översättning av G. Åman-Nilsson. Stockholm, bokförlaget Natur och kultur. [1946].

pp.136; cm.20 [uncut]; frontispiece portrait.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

Dictionnaire philosophique

54 Voltaire. Alfabetisk Fornunft. 30 Artikler fra Filosofisk Haand-Ordbog udvalgt, oversat og indledet af Leif Nedergaard. . . . København, Steen Hasselsbachs Forlag, MCMLVI.

pp.67; cm.17¾.

half-title: Hasselbachs Kultur-Bibliotek . . . Bind CLIII.

[Århus
Copenhagen
IMV]

L'Ecossaise

55 LE CAFFÉ, / OU / L'ECOSSAISE, / *COMEDIE*, / Par Mr. *Hume*, traduite en / François. / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / [*typographic ornament*] / à STOCKHOLM, / [*rule*] / Chez CHARLES THÉOPHILE ULFF, / Marchand Libraire dans la Grande Rue Neuve. / M D C C L X. /

pp.95.[i]; sig. A-E⁸; cm.19¼.

[Lund
Upsala]

56 Caffe=Huſet / eller / Skotlænderinden, / Comedie i fem Acter, / af / Hr. Hume. /

pp.89.[iii]; sig.[Y7]-Dd⁸, Ee⁴; cm.17¾.

translated by Andreas Charles Teilmann; forms part of Skueſpil / til / Brug / for / den danſke Skueplads. / . . . Førſte Bind. / . . . Kiøbenhavn, 1775. / Trykt paa Boghandler Gyldendals Forlag. /

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

57 SKOTTLÄNDSKAN / ELLER / *CAFFÉHUSET I LONDON.* / *COMEDIE* / I / FEM ACTER / AF / VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / *Öfverſättning.* / [*rule*] / [*typographic ornament*] / STOCKHOLM, / TRYCKT I KONGL. TRYCKERIET, 1786. /

pp.[iii].[i blank].102; sig.[ ]², A-F⁸, G³; cm.19½.

[Lund
Stockholm]

Eléments de la philosophie de Newton

58 Jaemfoerelſe / emellan / Newtons och Leibnitz's / Meningar / i Metaphyſiken och Naturlaeran, / af Voltaire. / [*ornamental rule*] /

Oefwerſaettning / af / J. J. v. B. / [*ornamental rule*] / Stockholm, Tryckt hos E. F. Marquard, 1799. /

pp.[ii].124; sig.[ ]², 1-8⁸; cm.18.

this text is based on the first book of the Eléments.

[Göteborg
Lund]

59 Den / Foerlorade Sonen. / Lust=Spel, / I Fem Oepningar. / Af Franſoeſkan oefwerſatt. / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt uti Kongl. Tryckeriet, 1750. /

pp.80; sig.A-E⁸; cm.16.

[Lund
Stockholm]

L'Enfant prodigue

60 Den / ruggesløſe / eller / forlorne Søn. / Comoedie i fem Acter. / Overſat af Franſken efter Mſr. Voltaires / L'Enfant Prodigue. /

pp.96; sig.F³-M²; cm.18½.

forms part of Skuespil / til / Brug / for / den danſke Skueplads. / . . . Andet Bind. / . . . Kiøbenhavn, 1776. / Trykt paa Boghandler Gyldendals Forlag. / *; the translation is by Bolle Willum Luxdorph; see H. Ehrencron-Müller,* Forfatterlexikon (*København 1927*), *v.228.*

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

Epître au roi de Dannemarc

61 EPITRE / A SA MAJESTÉ / LE / ROI / DE DANNEMARK. / Sur la liberté de la preſſe accordée / dans ſes Etats. / [*typographic ornament*] / [*double rule*] / A COPPENHAGUE, / Chez PIERRE STEINMANN, Libraire, / 1771. / [*within an ornamental frame*]

pp.[16]; sig.*a*-b⁴; cm.24.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

62 Hr. F. A. d. Voltaires / Brev / til Hans Majeſtæt / Kongen / af Danmark / angaaende den udi hans Stater forundte / Tryk=Frihed. / Tilligemed nogle / Afhandlinger / af beſlegtet Indhold. / [*engraving*] / [*typographic ornament*] / Kiøbenaavn, trykt hos. L. N. Svare. / [1771]

pp.31.[i blank]; sig.A-B⁸; cm.19¼.

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

Les Guèbres

63 LES GUEBRES, / *OU* / LA TOLÉRANCE, / *TRAGÉDIE*, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / A COPENHAGUE, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT. / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXXI. / *Avec Permiſſion du Roi.* /

pp.103.[i blank]; sig.A-F^{8}, G^{4}; cm.20^{3}⁄$_{4}$.

also issued in vol.iii of no.14.

[Copenhagen]

La Henriade

64 LA / HENRIADE, / par / M:r DE VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / Avec des Notes Historiques. / [*ornamental rule*] / [*swell rule*] / A Gothenbourg, / Chez SAMUEL NORBERG. / M.DCCC.I. / [*ornamental rule*] / *Aux dépens de H. F. Sjoebeck.* /

pp.184; sig.1-11^{8}, 12^{4}; cm.17^{3}⁄$_{4}$.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

65 LA / HENRIADE, / POËME, / AVEC LES NOTES ET VARIANTES; / SUIVI / DE L'ESSAI SUR LA POËSIE ÉPIQUE. / PAR VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / [*rule*] / *Avec Privilége du Roi.* / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / DE L'IMPRIMERIE D'OLAVE GRAHN, / L'AN 1813. /

pp.[v].[i blank].xliv.[i blank].[i].14.[ii].15-392; sig.[ ]^{3}, 1-21^{8}, 22^{4}; cm.21 ½ [uncut].

half-title: BIBLIOTHÈQUE / DES / AUTEURS CLASSIQUES / FRANÇAIS. / [*rule*] / TOME QUINZIÈME. / . . . ; *there is also an engraved half-title.*

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

66 Henriaden af Voltaire. Første og anden Sang frit oversat af Christian Lassen. . . . Throndhjem, trykt som Manuskript i Johan L. Sundts Bogtrykkeri, . . . 1874.

pp.40; cm.17^{3}⁄$_{4}$.

the title is taken from the cover.

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

Histoire de Charles XII

67 Leben / Karls XII. / Koenigs von Schweden / beschrieben / von / Herrn von Voltaire / Nach der dritten und lezten Auflage / aus dem Franzoesischen uebersezt; / mit noethigen / Anmerckungen, Nachrichten / und Urkunden versehen. / [*double rule*] / Stockholm, 1733. /

pp.[xxiv].456; sig.)(⁸,)( )(⁴, A-Ee⁸, Ff⁴; cm.17½; portrait frontispiece.

[Göteborg
Oslo]

68 Leben / Carls XII. / Koenigs von Schweden / beschrieben / von / Herrn von Voltaire / Nach der letztern Auflage aus dem / Franzoesischen uebersetzt; / mit nothigen / Anmerkungen, Nachrichten / und Urkunden versehen. / Andere und vermehrte Auflage. / [*double rule*] / Stockholm, 1733. /

pp.[xxiv].470; sig.)(⁸,)( )(⁴, A-Ff⁸, Gg³; cm.17½; portrait frontispiece.

[Upsala]

69 Kong / Carl den Tolvte / af Sverrig / Hans / Liv og Levnet / skreven paa Fransk af Hr. Voltaire, og efter den nye- / ste forbedrede Edition oversat paa Dansk / med / Anmerkninger forøget, af Hr. Fabricii Breve. / [*engraving*] / [*rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1761. / bekostet af Fridrich Christian Pelt / Boghandler paa Børsen, i No. 22 og 23. /

pp.[xxiv].501.[i]; sig.†, *⁶, A-Hh⁸, Ii³; cm.17¼; portrait frontispiece.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Göteborg]

70 Kong / Carl den Tolvte / af Sverrig / Hans / Liv og Levnet / Skrevet paa Fransk af Hr. Voltaire, og efter den nye- / ste forbedrede Edition oversat / paa Dansk / med Anmærkninger forøget, af Hr. Fabricii Breve. / Andet Oplag. / [*double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1798. / Paa Boghandler Frans Nicolai Pelts Forlag, / paa Børsen No. 22, 23 og 24. /

pp.[ii blank].[xiv].472; sig.[ ], A-Ff⁸, Gg⁴; cm.18; portrait frontispiece.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Stockholm]

71 KONUNG / CARL XII:s / HISTORIA, / FÖRFATTAD / AF / *Herr de VOLTAIRE.* / ÖFVERSATT / AF / *CARL LEONARD*

STÅLHAMMAR. / [*ornament*] / [*ornamental double rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / TRYCKT HOS A. JAC. NORDSTRÖM, 1785. /

pp.[viii].426; sig.[ ]^4, A-Cc^8, Dd^4; cm.18¼.

[Copenhagen
Göteborg
Lund]

72 Kongen af Sverrig, / Carl den Tolvtes / Liv og Levnet / af / Voltaire. / [*swell rule*] / Overſat af det Franſke. / Andet Oplag. / [*double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1798. / Paa Boghandler Frans Nicolai Pelts Forlag, / paa Børſen No. 22,23 og 24. /

pp.[ii blank].[xiv].472; sig.[ ], A-Ff^8, Gg^4; cm.18; portrait frontispiece.

[Oslo]

73 HISTOIRE / DE / CHARLES XII / PAR / VOLTAIRE, / AVEC / UN VOCABULAIRE / A L'USAGE DES ECOLES. / [*swell rule*] / [*rule*] / NORCOPIE, CHEZ N. SCHMIDT & C. 1831. /

pp.283.[i]; sig.1-19^8, 20^2; cm.18¼.

[Göteborg
Lund]

74 Histoire de Charles XII par Voltaire.... Med grammatikaliska anmärkningar och ordförklaringar af Y. Nyberg. . . . Upsala, W. Schultz. [1860].

pp.[iv].244.xlviii; cm.19½ [uncut].

[Göteborg
Stockholm
Upsala]

75 Histoire de Charles XII roi de Suède par Voltaire. . . . Andra upplagan. . . . Utgifven med förklaringar af Dr A. Lunberg, . . . Upsala, W. Schultz. [1884].

pp.[iv].300; cm.19.

[Göteborg
Lund
Upsala]

76 Carl XII:s historia av Voltaire. Med inledning av professor Carl Hallendorff. Översättning av Gunnar Örnulf. . . . Stockholm, Lars Hökerbergs förlag. [1918].

pp.xix.303.viii; cm.25½; 15 plates.

200 copies printed, to mark the bicentenary of the death of Charles XII.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

77 Karl den tolftes historia av Voltaire. . . . Stockholm, Albert Bonniers förlag. . . . MCMXVIII.

pp.[iv].310; cm.22¼; 50 illustrations.

the titlepage is printed in red and black; the translation is by Ernst Lundquist.

[Århus
Göteborg
Lund]

78 François Marie Voltaire. Kaarle XII:n historia. Suomentanut ja johdannolla sekä selityksillä varustanut O. A. Kallio. . . . Hämeenlinna, Arvi A. Karisto osakeyhtiö. [1921].

pp.347.[i]; cm.19½.

on half-title: Kariston klassillinen kirjasto 18.

[Helsinki]

79 Voltaire. Karl den tolvte. Oversatt av professor A. Trampe Bødtker. . . . Nasjonalforlaget, Oslo 1943.

pp.311; cm.19; portrait frontispiece.

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

80 Voltaire. Karl XII. Natur och kultur, Stockholm. [1961].

pp.260; cm.16¾.

half-title: Levande litteratur, Natur och kulturs klassikerserie; *the translation is by Lorenz von Numers; there is a postscript by Gunnar Fritzell.*

[Göteborg
IMV
Upsala]

Histoire de l'empire de Russie

81 Keiſer / Peter den Stores / Liv og Levnet / ſom indbeſatter det / Ruſiſke Riges Hiſtorie / udi hans / Regierings-Tid. / Skreven paa / Franſk / af / Herr Voltaire. / [*portrait medallion* ⟨*engraving*⟩] / [*rule*] / Førſte ⟨Anden⟩ Deel. / Med Tvende Landkort. / [*double rule*] / / Kiøbenhavn 1766 ⟨1769⟩. / Bekoſtet af Friderich Chriſtian Pelt, Kongl. Univerſitets / Boghandler paa Børſen i No. 22, 23 og 24. /

pp.313.[i]+[xiv].294.[xxii]; sig.𝔄-𝔗⁸, 𝔘⁵+)(⁷, 𝔄-𝔗⁸, 𝔘⁶; cm.17½; the first volume also has a frontispiece.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Oslo]

82 Ryſka Rikets / Hiſtoria, / Under PETER Den Store. / Oefwerſaettning ifraen Fransyskan. / [*ornamental rule*] / Foerra Delen. / [*typographical ornament*] / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt uti Kongl. Finska Boktryckeriet 1767. /

pp.226.[vi]; sig.A-O^{8}, P^{4}; cm.17¼.

no more published.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

L'Indiscret

83 L'INDISCRET, / Eller / Then om ſin Lycka / ſkrytande / CAVALLIEREN, / Luſt=Spel / Uti / En Afhandling, / Skrefwen pao Franſoeſka / Af Herr De VOLTAIRE, / Och / Pao Swenſk Vers oefwerſatt. / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, Tryckt uti Kongl. / Tryckeriet, år 1747. /

pp.40; sig.A-B^{8}, C^{4}; cm.15¼.

the translation is by Sev. Bredah.

[Lund
Stockholm]

84 Den / Aabenmundede, / COMOEDIE / Udi een Act. / Overſat af Franſk. / [*ornament*] / Imprimatur / J. P. ANCHERSEN, D. / [*double rule*] / KJOBENHAVN, / 1748. /

pp.[43].[iii blank]; sig.A-C^{8}; cm.17.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Oslo]

85 L'INDISCRET, / COMEDIE, / *En Vers & en un Acte, de Mr. de* / *VOLTAIRE.* / [*ornament*] / *Se Vend* / A COPENHAGUE / Chez J. P. CHEVALIER, dans le Skiden- / ſtræde, à l'Enſeigne du Cavalier. / [*rule*] / MDCCXLIX. /

pp.45.[i]; sig.A^{12}, B^{11}; cm.16.

also issued in RECUEIL / DE / PIECES CHOISIES / DU / NOUVEAU THEATRE / FRANÇOIS / ET / ITALIEN. / TOME V. / [*ornament*] / A COPENHAGUE [*&c. as above*].

this series contains other plays by Voltaire, which appear, however, to have been printed in the Netherlands.

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

86 L'INDISCRET, / *COMEDIE*, / EN UN ACTE ET EN VERS, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / *Repréſentée ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, par / les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, / le* 17 *Avril* 1769. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXIX. / *Avec Permiſſion du Roi.* /

pp.43 [*sic* for 48]; sig.A-C^{8}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.ii of no.14.

[Copenhagen
IMV
Upsala]

L'Ingénu

87 Öfversättningar från främmande författare af Henrik Westin.... Andra delen.... Göteborg, Göteborgs handelstidnings aktiebolags tryckeri, 1885.

pp.[ii].155; cm.23¼.

printed in red and black; pp.47-48: Pratmakaren. Komedi i en akt af Voltaire....

[Lund
Stockholm
Upsala]

88 L'INGÉNU, / ELLER / NATURENS SON. / [*ornamental rule*] / *Sanfärdig Hiſtoria* / AF / VOLTAIRE / [*swell rule*] / *Oefverſaettning.* / [*ornamental rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos Henrik A. Nordström, / 1798. /

pp.[vi].126; sig.)(³, A-P⁴, Q³; cm.17½.

[Göteborg
Lund]

89 Naturens Barn. / [*ornamental rule*] / En ſand Hiſtorie / af / Voltaire. / [*ornamental rule*] / Af det Tydſke. / [*double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1799. / Trykt paa Schiøtz's Forlag hos M. Seeſt. /

pp.[i].[i blank].116.[ii]; sig.[ ]¹, A-F⁸, G⁷, H⁴; cm.17¼.

[Copenhagen]

90 Voltaire: Naturmennesket . . . en virkelig Historie.... Oversat af Carl Michelsen. . . . København. Forlagt af P. Hauberg & Comp. og Jul. Gjellerup Hoffensberg & Trap's Etab^{l}. [1888].

pp.120; cm.14.

on cover: Dansk Folkebibliothek, N° 53.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

91 Den Troskyldige, en sandfærdig Historie, Efter Fader Quesnels Manuskript ved Hr. de Voltaire. Med Fyrsten af Ligne[s] Besøg hos Voltaire. . . . I Kiøbenhavn, hos v. Pio, Povl Branner, Boende i Nørregaden, næst ved Bispegaardan. . . . M. CM. XVII.

pp.xiv.152; cm.14½; frontispiece portrait.

the titlepage is printed in red and black; half-title: Pios Vignet-Bøger udgivne af Kai Friis-Møller; *the translation is by Henry Madsen.*

[Århus
Copenhagen
Göteborg]

92 François de Voltaire. Den Troskyldige. Paa Dansk ved Henry Madsen. Med Forord af Kai Friis Møller. Illustreret af Mogens Zieler. København 1943. . . . Thaning & Appels Forlag.

pp.147; cm.18¾.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

Lettres philosophiques

93 Den Beroemde / Herr / WOLTAIRES / Ellofte / PHILOSOPHI- / ſke=Bref, / Om / Koppornes Impning, / Eller / Saettet att utt / Barnens yngre aor, slyt= / ta dem ifraon den ena till den andra, foerr / aon de komma af ſig ſielfwe, paa det att de / ſkola undwika den faran, ſam dem i aeldre / aoren foereſtaor daeraf. Tryckt i Rouan / paa Franſoeſka Aor 1734. / [*ornamental rule*] / SEDERHOLM, / Tryckt hos Carl Johanſon Roepke. / Aor 1745. /

pp.[8]; sig.)(⁴; cm.17¾.

[Stockholm]

Mahomet

94 LE / FANATISME, / *OU* / MAHOMET / LE PROPHETE; / *TRAGEDIE*, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / Corrigée ſur les Manuſcrits de la Comédie Fran- / çaiſe à Paris, ſuivant l'Auteur. / *Repréſentée ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, par / les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, / le Nov.* 1767. / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXVII. / *Avec Permiſſion du ROI.* /

pp.87.[i blank]; sig.A-E⁸, F⁴; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.ii of no.14; the blank appears as shown.

[Copenhagen]

95 MAHOMET. / TRAGEDI / I FEM AKTER, / AF / VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / *Öfversättning / af / J. D. VALERIUS.* / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos CARL DELEN, 1806. /

pp.79.[i]; sig.[1]-5[8]; cm.20¼.

[Göteborg
IMV
Lund]

96 Mahomed. / [*ornamental rule*] / Sørgespil i 5 Acter / ved/ Voltaire. / [*ornamental rule*] / Oversat / ved / Thomas Thaarup, / Ridder af Dannebrogen. / [*ornamental rule* / Kjøbenhavn, 1815. / Trykt hos og forlagt af Directeur J. F. Schultz, / Kongelig og Universitets-Bogtrykker. /

pp.96; sig.A-F[8]; cm.19¼. [uncut].

[Århus
Copenhagen
Oslo]

Mérope

97 Mr. de Voltaires / Merope / oversat / ved / H. Schiermann. / [*rule*] /

pp.98; sig.A-F[8], G[1]; cm.17¾.

this forms part of Andet Stykke *of the* Forsøg i de kiønne og nytige Videnskabe ([Copenhagen] 1764).

[Oslo]

98 Voltaires / Merope / oversat / ved / H. Schiermann. / [*double rule*] /

89 [*sic* for 98]; sig.A-F[8], G[1]; cm.17.

as next above.

[Oslo]

99 MÉROPE, / *TRAGÉDIE*, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / Suivant la nouvelle édition in 4°. 1768. / *Représentée sur le Théâtre de la Cour, par / les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, / le* 5e *Janvier* 1770. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXX. / *Avec Permission du Roi.* /

pp.80; sig.A-E[8]; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.ii of no.14.

[Copenhagen]

100 MEROPE, / SORGE-SPEL. / [*vignette*] / [*ornamental double rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos JOHAN GEORG LANGE, 1774. /

pp.[viii].72; sig.[ ]⁴, A-D⁸, E⁴; cm.19¾.

the dedication to count Carl Fredric Scheffer is signed A. F. Ristell, the translator.

[Copenhagen
Lund
Stockholm]

101 KONGL. / SVENSKA THEATREN. / [*rule*] / *FIERDE BANDET.* / [*rule*] / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / *Med Kongl. Maj:ts Allernådigste Privilegium.* / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / TRYKT I KONGL. TRYCKERIET, 1778. /

pp.[107]-200: Merope, sorge-spel. Första gången upförd på Kongl. theatren den 6 junii 1777.

the dedication to count Carl Fredric Scheffer is signed A. F. Ristell.

[Lund]

102 Merope. / Tragedie i fem Acter / af / Voltaire. / [*rule*] / Fordanſket / af H. v. B. / [*swell rule*] / Kiel, / trykt i der Kongelige Skolebogtrykkerie. / [*rule*] / 1831. /

pp.vi.104; sig.[ ]³, 1-6⁸, 7⁴; cm.12¼.

the translator's name is Johann Heinrich von Buchwald.

[Copenhagen]

Micromégas

103 Herr *de VOLTAIRS* / MICROMEGAS / Eller / LILL-MASSE. / Det aᵒr: / Om en, i haᵉn ſeende til Inwaᵒnarne paᵒ / andra staᵉllen, mycket liten, men i jaᵉmn= / foᵉrelſe mot oſs grufweligen stor Mans / Reſor ifraᵒn Sirius, genom Saturnus, / hwaraᵉſt han feck en liten naᵉtt Foᵉljeſla= / gare af allenaſt et tuſende famnars hoᵉgd / och ſedermera, i ſaᵉllskap med honom, / efter maᵒnga andra Planeters genomwan= / drande, aᵉnteligen ock beſoᵉkte waᵒrt / lilla Jord=Klot, / En kort, men maᵉrkelig / Beraᵉttelſe / Af Franſoᵉſkan oᵉfwerſatt. / [*ornamental triple rule*] / NORRKOᵉPJNG, / Tryckt hos JOHAN EDMAN, paᵒ egen bekoſtnad, / aᵒr 1762. /

pp.40; sig.A-B⁸, C⁴; cm.16½.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

104 Voltaire. Micromegas, Filosofi om en aand der kritiserer Menneskenes Taabeligheder. Nytaar 1945. . . . A/S Modersmaalet-Haderslev.

pp.3-15; cm.22¾ [uncut].

100 copies of this fragment were printed on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of Voltaire's birth.

[Copenhagen]

Le Monde comme il va

105 Verden ſom den er / Eller / Babucs / Syn, / ſkreven af hamſelv / og / Memnon. / Overſatte af det Franſke. / [*ornamental triple rule*] / Sorøe, 1758. / Trykt hos Jonas Lindgren, det / Redderl. Acad. Bogtrykker. /

pp.48; sig.A-C⁸; cm.16½.

in the following year appeared Fortsettelse af Babucs syn [*by Jens Schelderup Sneedorff*], Breve til Babuc [*by Tyge Jesper Rothe*] *and* Babucs svar.

[Copenhagen
Göteborg]

106 Livsanskuelse gennem Tiderne. Redigeret af Aage Marcus med bistand af Bjørn Ochsner. Det 18. århundrede. Ludvig Holberg, Voltaire, David Hume, Frederik den store, Lichtenberg, Schiller. Gyldendal [København] 1956.

pp.131; cm.20.

pp.45-62: Verdens gang.

[Göteborg]

La Mort de César

107 LA MORT / DE CESAR, / TRAGEDIE / DE M. DE VOLTAIRE. / [*rule*] / *CÆSARS DÖD, / SORGE-SPEL / I TRE ÖPNINGAR. / PÅ SVENSKA Oe FVERSATT I LIKA MÅNGA / VERSER MED ORIGINALET / AF / C. M.* / [*ornamental rule*] / *STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos Direct. LARS SALVIUS*, 1764. /

pp.109.[i].[ii blank]; sig.A-G⁸; cm.20¼.

the dedication to the crown prince is signed C. Manderstroem.

[Lund
Stockholm]

108 LA MORT / *DE* / CÉSAR, / *TRAGÉDIE*, / EN TROIS ACTES. / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A*

COPENHAGUE, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXXI. / *Avec Permiſſion du Roi.* /

pp.56; sig.A-C^{8}, D^{4}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.iii of no.14.

[Copenhagen]

109 CESARS DÖD. / *Tragedi i Tre Akter*, / AF / VOLTAIRE. / [*swell rule*] / ÖFVERSATT / AF / *J. REMMER.* / [*swell rule*] / *Uppford på Kongl. Theatern den 21 April 1829.* / [*swell rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos *J. Hörberg*, 1829. /

pp.[iv].49.[i blank]; sig.[ ]^{2}, 1-3^{8}, [ ]^{1}; cm.20¾.

[Lund
Stockholm
Upsala]

110 Öfversättningar fran främmande författare af Henrik Westin.... Andra delen. . . . Göteborg, Göteborgs handelstidnings aktiebolags tryckeri, 1885.

pp.[ii].155; cm.23¼.

printed in red and black; pp.103-150: Cæsars död. Tragedi i tre akter af Voltaire....

[Lund]

Nanine

111 NANINE, / OU / L'HOMME SANS / PRE'JUGE', / *COMEDIE EN III. ACTES*, / EN VERS DE DIX SYLLABES, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / *Repréſentée au Théâtre de la Cour, à Copen- / hague, par les Comédiens François Ordi- / naires du Roi, le 4 Février* 1767. / [*ornament*] / Suivant la derniere édition de 1764. / *A COPEN-HAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXVII. / *Avec Permiſſion du ROI.* /

pp.[ii].78; sig.[ ]^{1}, A-D^{8}, E^{7}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.ii of no.14.

[Copenhagen
IMV]

112 Skuespil / til Brug / for / den danske Skueplads. / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / Ottende Bind. / [*double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1783. / Trykt Gyldendals Forlag, / hos Johan Rudolphi Thiele. /

pp.[iii].[i blank].512; sig.[ ]^{2}, A-Ii^{8}; cm.17¾.

pp.[243]-314: Nanine, / eller / Manden uden Fordomme. / [*ornamental double rule*] / Komedie i tre Akter, / overſat af Franſk / efter Hr. Voltaires / Nanine, ou l'homme sans préjugé.

the translation is by [ ] Falck; see H. Ehrencron-Müller, Forfätter-lexikon (*København 1926*), *iii.12.*

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

L'Orphelin de la Chine

113 L'ORPHELIN / DE LA CHINE, / *TRAGEDIE*; / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / Corrigée ſur les Manuſcrits de la Comédie Fran- / çaiſe à Paris, ſuivant l'Auteur. / *Repréſentée au Théâtre de la Cour, à Copen- / hague, par les Comédiens François Ordi- / naires du Roi, le Février* 1767. / [*ornament*] / *A COPENHAGUE,* / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXVII. / *Avec Permiſſion du ROI.* /

pp.72; sig.A-D^{8}, E^{4}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.i of no.14; the blank appears as shown.

[Copenhagen]

114 GENGIS CHAN, / *TRAGEDIE.* / UTI / FEM ACTER. / UTI / DERAS KONGL. MAJESTAeTERS / och KONGL. HUSETS NaeRVARO. / Förſta Gången Upförd Den 3 November 1777. / [*ornament*] / [*ornamental quadruple rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos Anders Jacobsson Nordström, 1777. / På Bokhandlaren J. C. Holmbergs bekoſtnad. /

pp.[vii].[i blank].48.33-59.42; sig.[ ], A-I^{4}, K^{2}; cm.22¼.

the dedication to the king is signed Carl Hindrich Flintberg, the translator.

[Copenhagen
Stockholm]

115 COUPLETTER, / HOeRANDE TIL / BALLETTEN / EFTER / Tragedien / GENGIS CHAN / [*ornament*] / [*ornamental quadruple rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos Anders Jacobsson Nordſtröm, 1777. /

pp.[4]; [ ]^{2}; cm.21.

[Copenhagen]

116 Gengiskan i China. / [*swell rule*] / Overſættelſe af Voltaires / L'Orphelin de la Chine. / [*swell rule*] / Ved E. H. Pram. / [*ornamental rule*] / Kjøbenhavn, 1815. / Trykt og forlagt af Andreas Seidelin, / i ſtore Kannikeſtraede No. 46. /

pp.xxx.[ii].100; sig.[ ]^{12}, *^{4}, A-D^{12}, E^{2}; cm.15½.

dedicated to Adam Oehlenschläger.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Oslo]

Précis du siècle de Louis XV

117 Hiſtorien / Af / REVOLUTIONEN / I / GENUA Udi Aarene 1746 og 1747. / Skrevet paa Franſk / Af / Monſr. VOLTAIRE / Og / Overſadt / Ved / CHR. GRAM. / [*rule*] / Chriſtiania, / Trykt hos / Samuel Conrad Schwach. / [1773]

pp.44; sig.A-B⁸, C⁶; cm.15.

this is a translation of the larger part of chapters xx-xxi of the Précis du siècle de Louis XV.

[Oslo]

118 PRÉCIS DU SIECLE / DE LOUIS XV. / [*rule*] / [*rule*] / *Avec Privilége du Roi.* / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / DE L'IMPRIMERIE D'OLAVE GRAHN, / L'AN 1813. /

pp.[iii].[i blank].464; sig.[ ]², 1-29¹⁶; cm.21½ [uncut].

half-title: BIBLIOTHÈQUE / DES / AUTEURS CLASSIQUES / FRANÇAIS. / [*rule*] / TOME DIX-HUITIÈME. / . . . ; *there is also an engraved half-title.*

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

La Princesse de Babylone

119 Den / Babyloniſka / Prinſeſſan. / Skaemtſam / Kaerlets-Saga / Af Herr de VOLTAIRE / Foerſwenſkad / Af / Den Comiſke Auctorn. / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / Stockholm, / Tryckt hos J. C. Holmberg, 1786. /

pp.[ii].116; sig.[ ]¹, A-G⁸, H²; cm.18.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

120 Prinſeſſen / af / Babylon / af Voltære. / [*ornament*] / [*ornamental double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn 1787. / Paa Boghandler Tiſkiøbs Forlag. / Trykt hos P. H. Hoecke. /

pp.148; sig.A-J⁸, K²; cm.17¼.

[Copenhagen]

121 Voltaire. Prinsessan av Babylon. Översättning av E. N. Tigerstedt. . . . Helsingfors, Söderström & c:o förlagsaktiebolag. [1941].

pp.122; cm.20½.

[Göteborg
Lund]

122 — [another issue, identical except for the imprint: Stockholm, Bokförlaget Natur och kultur].

the book was printed in Åbo.

[Århus
Stockholm
Upsala]

Samson

123 Un acte inédit d'un opéra de Voltaire. Publié d'après deux anciennes copies manuscrites de la Bibliothèque royale de Stockholm, avec des fac-similes, par Carl Wahlund. [Upsala 1905].

pp.60; cm.26 [uncut].

forms part of Studier i modern språkvetenskap utgifna af Nyfilologiska sällskapet i Stockholm, *vol.iii; also published separately; one of the Upsala copies contains two letters to Wahlund about this edition.*

[Århus
Göteborg
IMV]

Les Scythes

124 LES / SCYTHES, / *TRAGEDIE*, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE, / *Repréſentée ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, par les* / *Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, le* 29 / *Janv.* 1768. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M. DCC. LXVIII. / *Avec Permiſſion du ROI.* /

pp.[ii].viii.72; sig.[A1], *4, A2-D8, E4; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.ii of no.14.

[Copenhagen]

Sémiramis

125 SEMIRAMIS, / *TRAGEDIE*; / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / *Repréſentée ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, par* / *les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi,* / *le* 30 *Nov.* 1767. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE,* / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXVII. / *Avec Permiſſion du ROI.* /

pp.88; sig.A-E8, F4; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.ii of no.14.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

Le Siècle de Louis XIV

126 SIECLE / DE / LOUIS XIV. / [*rule*] / TOME PREMIER ⟨SECOND⟩. / [*rule*] / *Avec Privilége du Roi.* / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / DE L'IMPRIMERIE D'OLAVE GRAHN, / L'AN 1813. /

pp.[iv].465.[i blank]+[iv].515.[iii]; sig.[ ]^{4}, 1-28^{8}, 29^{7}, 30^{2}+[ ]^{2}, 1-30^{8}, 31^{12}, 32^{7}; cm.21½ [uncut].

half-title: BIBLIOTHÈQUE / DES / AUTEURS CLASSIQUES / FRANÇAIS. / [*rule*] / TOME SEIZIÈME ⟨DIX-SEPTIÈME⟩. / . . . ; *there is also an engraved titlepage.*

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

Socrate

127 SOCRATES, / Ska°de=Spel. / Skrifwit pa° Engelska / Af / Mr. TOMPSON, / Defwerſatt pa° Franſka ſpra°ket 1755 / Och / Derifra°n foer ſwenſkadt 1769. / [*ornamental rule*] / Stockholm, / Tryckt uti Kongl. Tryckeriet, 1770. /

pp.55.[i blank]; sig.A-C^{8}, D^{4}; cm.17.

[Stockholm]

Tancrède

128 TANCREDE, / *TRAGEDIE*; / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / Corrigée ſur les Manuſcrits de la Comédie Fran- / çaiſe à Paris, ſuivant l'Auteur. / *Repréſentée au Théâtre de la Cour, à Copen- / hague, par les Comédiens François ordi- / naires du Roi, le Mars* 1767. / [*ornament*] / *A COPENHAGUE,* / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXVII. / *Avec Permiſſion du ROI.* /

pp.84; sig.A-E^{8}, F^{2}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.i of no.14; the blank appears as shown.

[Copenhagen]

129 Tancredo. / [*ornamental rule*] / Ridder=Sørgeſpil / i fem Acter / efter / Voltaire og Gøthe, / ved / Prof. K. L. Rahbek. / [*ornamental rule*] / Kiøbenhavn 1803. / Trykt og forlagt hos Directeur Joh. Fred. Schultz, / Kongelig og Univerſitetsbogtrykker. /

pp.[viii].86.[ii blank]; sig.[ ]^{4}, A-E^{8}, F^{4}; cm.16¾.

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

130 — [another issue, identical except that the imprint reads: Trykt hos. . . .].
[Århus]

131 Tancredo. / [*swell rule*] / Syngestykke i to Acter / efter Voltaires Sørgespil; / sat i Musik / af / Joachim Rossini. / [*swell rule*] / Metrisk oversat og bearbeidet / ved / N. T. Bruun. / [*swell rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1820. / Paa Boghandler Hartvig Soldins Forlag, / Pilestraede No. 117. / Trykt hos E. M. Cohens Enke. /

pp.95.[v]; sig.A-F^{8}, [ ]^{2}; cm.17½.
[Copenhagen]

Le Taureau blanc

132 Voltaire. Den hvide Tyr. Indledet, oversat og kommenteret of Magister Leif Nedergaard. Radeninger af Lors Bo. Scripta* [København 1952].

pp.5-85; cm.25½ [uncut].

150 copies privately printed; forms no.7 of the series.
[Copenhagen]

Le Temple du goût

133 Der / Tempel des Geschmacks / [*rule*] / von Voltaire. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / Altona / gedruckt bey Christian Julian Buelow / Koen. privil. Buchdr. 1782. /

pp.54.[ii blank]; sig.A-C^{8}, D^{4}; cm.15.

dedicated to princess Louisa.
[Copenhagen]

Le Tocsin des rois

134 Kongernes / Storm=Klokke / ringet for / de Christelige Magter / ved / Voltaire. / [*rule*] / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / Nu oversat at og oplyst med Anmærkninger. / [*double rule*] / Kiøbenhavn. / Trykt og tilkiøbs hos Morten Hallager, boen= / de paa Nørregade No. 245. / [*within a double ornamental frame*] / [*c.*1773]

pp.8; sig.*^{4}; cm.16¾.
[Göteborg]

Traité sur la tolérance

135 Voltaire. . . . Traktat om toleransen. Inledning och översättning av G. Åman-Nilsson. Sthlm, Tidens förlag, MCMXXX.

pp.244; cm.19¼; frontispiece portrait.

the titlepage is printed in red and black.

[Århus
Göteborg
Lund]

136 Voltaires bön. Slöjdföreningens skola, Göteborg 1952.

pp.3-9; cm.21.

this is chapter XXIII of the Traité.

[Göteborg]

137 Voltaire. Traktat om toleransen, med inledning av Herbert Tingsten. Bokförlaget Prisma, Stockholm. [1964].

pp.159.[i]; cm.18½.

this is the translation by G. Åman-Nilsson.

[IMV]

Zadig

138 Zadig / eller / Skæbnen, / En Osterlandsk Historie, / I sidst afvigte Aar udgiven paa Fransk / af / Hr. Voltaire, / Oversat paa Dansk / af / Frid. Christian Eilschov, / Phil. Mag. / [*double rule*] / Kiø=benhavn, 1750. / Trykt hos Christoph Georg Glasing, / boende i Fridrichsberg=Gaden, og findes / samme steds tilkisbs. /

pp.[x].144; sig.)(⁶, A-F¹²; cm.15 [uncut].

dedicated to baron Ludwig af Holberg.

[Copenhagen]

139 Oesterlaendske Prinsens / Zadigs / Historia, / Sammansattad / Af / Herr Woltaire, / Och / Fraon Fransoeskan oefwersatt. / [*rule*] / Tryckt i Upsala 1760. / [*rule*] / Paa *DAVID SEGERDAHLS* Foerlag, och / finnes hos honom til kioeps i Stockholm. /

pp.112; sig.A-G⁸; cm.17.

the translation is by Göran Rothman.

[Göteborg
Stockholm]

140 Oſterlaendſke / Prinſens / Zadigs / Hiſtoria, / Sammanfattad / Af / Herr Voltaire, / Och / fraon franſoeſkan oefwerſatt. / [*ornamental rule*] / Tryckt i Upſala, i Kongl. Acad. Tryckeriet, / Paa Bokhandlaran David Segerdahls foer= / lag, och ſinnes hos honom til koeps. / [?1760]

pp.112; sig.A-G⁸; cm.15.

except for the title-leaf this edition is from the same setting as that next above.

[Stockholm]

141 ZADIG, / Eller / Oedet, / Oefterlåndſk Hiſtoria / *af* / *Herr de VOLTAIRE.* / [*ornamental rule*] / Oefverſatt ifrån Franſyſkan. / [*ornamental rule*] / [*ornament*] / [*rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos *Holmberg och Wennberg* 1780. /

pp.109.[iii]; sig.A-G⁸; cm.17¼.

[Lund
Stockholm
Upsala]

142 «Christiansens Miniaturbibliothek». . . . Voltaire. Zadig eller Skæbnen. Østerlandsk Fortælling. Paa dansk ved Fru Clara Levy. . . . A. Christiansens Forlag, København-Kristiania. MDCCCC.

pp.128; cm.14½.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

143 De Voltaire. Zadigs äfventyr. En orientalisk berättelse om ödet. Öfversättning af Arthur Nordén. . . . Stockholm, Wahlström & Widstrand. [1912].

pp.viii.120; cm.15¾; portrait frontispiece.

[Göteborg
Lund
Upsala]

144 François Marie Voltaire. Sallimus (Zadig, ou la destinée). Itämainen kertomus. Suomentanut ja johdannolla varustanut O. A. Kallio. . . . Arvi A. Karisto osakeyhtiö, Hämeenlinnassa. [1918].

pp.136.[ii]; cm.19½.

on half-title: Kariston klassillinen kirjasto 6.

[Helsinki]

145 — Toinen painos. [1955].

pp.153.[iii]; cm.20¼ [uncut].

[Helsinki]

146 P. A. Norstedt & söners skolbibliotek. II. Franska författare. 13. Voltaire. Zadig ou la destinée, histoire orientale (1747). Extraits publiés avec une introduction et des notes par Hugo Hultenberg. Andra upplagan. Stockholm. . . . [1929].

pp.[ii].71; cm.19¾ [uncut].

[Göteborg]

147 Voltaire. Zadig eller Skæbnen. . . . En østerlandske Fortælling i ny kommenteret Oversættelse og med Indledning af Magister Leif Nedergaard. Nordiske Landes Bogforlag. Frederica 1946.

pp.148; cm.20½.

with illustrations by Sven Aagaard Hansen; the titlepage is printed in black and yellow.

[Århus
Copenhagen
IMV]

Zaïre

148 Zayre / Tragedie af Mr. Voltaire, / Overſat / Til den Kongelige Danſke Skue- / Pladſes Brug / af Barthold Johan Lodde. / [*rule*] / Sat cito, ſi ſat bene. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / Findes tilkiøbs hos Portneren ved Comœdie-Huuſet, / indbunden for 24 Skilling. / [Copenhagen 1757].

pp.[72]; sig.A-F⁴; cm.20.

[Copenhagen
Oslo]

149 Zaire / et / Sørge-Spill. / [*double rule*] / Forfattet i det Franske / af / Herr de Voltaire. / Og / overſat / i det Danſke / af / ***. / [*typographical ornament*] / [*rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, / trykt hos Ludolph Henrich Lillie, boende i ſtore / Fiol-Straede, i den forgyldte Ore. / [1756].

pp.96.[i].[i blank]; sig.A-F⁸, [ ]¹; cm.19¼.

translated by Anna Marie Kehl; see, as also for the date, H. Ehrencron-Müller, Forfatterlexikon (*København 1927*), *v.352.*

[Copenhagen]

150 Zayre / Tragoedie / af Mſr. Voltaire / overſat af / Barthold Johan Lodde. / [*rule*] / Andet Oplag. / [*rule*] / [*ornamental triple rule*] / Kiøbenhavn, 1766. / Trykt hos L. L. Heiden. / Findes tilkiøbs hos Portneren ved Comoedie-Huset for 24 ſs. /

pp.88; sig.A⁴, B-F⁸; cm.19¾.

[Århus
Copenhagen
Oslo]

151 ZAYRE, / *TRAGÉDIE*, / Par Mr. DE VOLTAIRE. / Suivant la nouvelle édition in 4°. 1768. / *Repréſentée ſur le Théâtre de la Cour, par / les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, / le* 18 *Décembre* 1769. / [*ornament*] / [*double rule*] / *A COPENHAGUE*, / Chez CL. PHILIBERT, / Imprimeur-Libraire. / [*rule*] / M DCC LXIX. / *Avec Permiſſion du Roi.* /

pp.79.[i]; sig.A-E^{8}; cm.20¾.

also issued in vol.i of no.14.

[Copenhagen
Upsala]

152 ZAYRA, / SORGE-SPEL; / AF / Herr De Voltaire. / [*typographic ornament*] / [*rule*] / O^{e}FVERSA^{e}TTNING. / [*rule*] / [*ornamental triple rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tryckt hos Johan Georg Lange, 1773. /

pp.[viii].80; sig.[ ]^{4}, A-E^{8}; cm.19¾.

the dedication 'au roi' is signed A. F. Ristell, the translator.

[Lund]

153 — [another edition, identical but for the date: 1774.]

[Stockholm]

154 ZAYR, / SORGE-SPEL; / af Herr de Voltaire, / Upfördt i Riks-Salen, för / KONGL. HUSET, / På Hans Maj:ts vår Allernådigſte / KONUNGS / Höga Födelſe-Dag, den 24 Januarii 1774. / [*vignette*] / O^{e}FVERSA^{e}TNING. / [*ornamental rule*] / STOCKHOLM, / Tr. hos H. Fougt, R. af K. W. O. och K:gl. Boktr. /

pp.[xiii].87.[i blank]; sig.)(⁶, A-E^{8}, F^{4}; cm.21¾.

the translation is by E. Solberg; dedicated to the K. Vitterhets Academi.

[Lund
Stockholm
Upsala]

155 Zaire. / Tragedie i fem Acter / af / Voltaire. / [*ornamental rule*] / Fordanſket / af / H. v. B. / [*rule*] / Kiel, tryckt hos C. F. Mohr. 1831. /

pp.x.90; sig.[ ]^{5}, 1-5^{8}, 6^{5}; cm.14 [uncut].

the translator's name is Johann Heinrich von Buchwald.

[Århus
Copenhagen]

Apocrypha

156 ODE / SUR / LA GUERRE / PAR / Monsieur VOLTAIRE. / Eller ODE foᵉwer Kriget, / Foᵉrfattad af / Herr VOLTAIRE, / Och / Paᵒ en Frid-aᵉlſkande Herres Befalning, / ifraᵒn Franſoᵉſkan

oefwerſadt / af / CARL NYREN. [*rule*] / GOeTHEBORG, / Trykt hos IMMANUEL SMITT, R. G. Boktr. aer 1760. /

pp.[16]; sig.A-B⁴; cm. 21¼.

contains the original text (which is really by Charles Bordes) and the translation.

[Göteborg
Lund
Stockholm]

157 Voltaires / Tilleg / til / Zadig. / [*rule*] / Overſat af Franſk / ved M. S. Nyeborg, / af den Jødiske Nation. / [*typographic ornament*] / Kiøbenhavn 1766. / Sælges for 4 Sk. hos C. Schisnning, / boende i Puſtervig. /

pp.15.[i blank]; sig.)(⁸; cm.18½ [uncut].

[Århus
Copenhagen]

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Voltaire a-t-il fait une offre d'hospitalité à Rousseau?

Un témoignage peu connu par Jean Marie Roland

par Gita May

Les portraits de Voltaire, faits avec la plume par des contemporains qui eurent l'honneur d'être ses hôtes à Ferney, ne manquent certes pas. Il en est un, cependant, qui, à notre connaissance, n'a jamais été relevé, bien qu'il saisisse sur le vif quelques-uns des traits essentiels de cette étonnante personnalité, et ceci dans des attitudes à la fois familières et révélatrices: dans le feu de la conversation, à table et à la promenade. Outre l'intérêt documentaire et psychologique de ce témoignage de première main, il a aussi le mérite d'apporter des détails curieux et nouveaux sur l'attitude de Voltaire à l'égard de Rousseau en 1762, lors de la condamnation, à Paris et à Genève, de l'*Emile* et du *Contrat social* et du décret de prise de corps de leur auteur.

Le texte en question est de Roland de La Platière, Inspecteur des Manufactures à Amiens et Lyon sous l'ancien régime, avant de devenir ministre de l'intérieur sous le bref régime des Girondins. Il ne s'agit donc pas d'un inconnu. Loin de là. Mais le nom de Roland est plus souvent associé à l'histoire politique qu'à l'histoire littéraire et est en outre quelque peu injustement éclipsé par celui de sa célèbre épouse.[1]

[1] voir Gita May, *De Jean-Jacques Rousseau à madame Roland: essai sur la sensibilité préromantique et révolutionnaire* (Genève 1964).

Protégé de Trudaine, administrateur libéral et éclairé, travailleur infatigable et homme aux mœurs austères et irréprochables, Roland était un personnage plus respectacle qu'aimable. Ses manières rudes et franches, alliées à un certain pédantisme opiniâtre et inflexible, ne rendaient pas toujours sa société très agréable. Mais si son jugement tendait à être sévère et strict, il se montrait généralement aussi ferme qu'impartial, et il poussait le scrupule et le souci de l'exactitude et de la vérité jusqu'à la manie.

De multiples et lourdes responsabilités n'empêchaient pas Roland d'avoir un goût passionné des voyages et une curiosité insatiable des coutumes et habitudes étrangères. Et sa qualité d'Inspecteur des Manufactures lui permettait de satisfaire pleinement cette tendance d'esprit cosmopolite, puisqu'il était souvent chargé de missions officielles visant à étudier sur place les conditions industrielles et commerciales de pays tels que l'Angleterre, l'Italie, l'Allemagne et la Suisse.

Les mémoires techniques et journaux de voyages rédigés par ce fonctionnaire zélé pour le progrès témoignent d'un effort constant pour améliorer la situation économique française sous l'ancien régime et pour favoriser une plus grande liberté de l'industrie et du commerce. Dans des circonstances qui eussent découragé un homme moins obstiné et moins dévoué au bien public, Roland combattait, avec plus d'énergie que de tact, il est vrai, contre le système médiéval des privilèges exclusifs. Ce rôle lui valut bien des démêlés avec les marchands et fabricants jaloux de sauvegarder leurs divers monopoles.[2]

Mais Roland était aussi un homme qui se piquait de philosophie et de littérature. Partisan fanatique de la cause des Lumières et membre de quinze académies et sociétés de sciences et belles-lettres, il déployait une activité littéraire vraiment remarquable. Il est vrai que ses multiples rapports, discours et lettres attestent plus de diligence et de connaissance que d'imagination et d'originalité. Mais ils n'en révèlent pas moins une intelligence ouverte

[2] *Lettres de madame Roland*, éd. Cl. Perroud (Paris 1902), ii.594-612.

aux idées les plus avancées du siècle et une appréciation réfléchie des œuvres d'écrivains tels que Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau et Buffon.

C'est dans un ouvrage imprimé en six volumes en 1780 (non pas à Amsterdam, comme l'indique la page de titre, mais à Dieppe), et dont le titre exact est *Lettres écrites de Suisse, d'Italie, de Sicile et de Malthe, par M***, avocat en parlement, et de plusieurs académies de France et des Arcades de Rome, etc., à mlle *** à Paris, en 1776, 1777 et 1778*, que se trouve la relation de trois voyages effectués à Ferney. La destinataire de ces épîtres, la mystérieuse mlle *** à Paris, n'était autre que Marie Jeanne Phlipon, la future mme Roland, à qui notre Inspecteur des Manufactures faisait alors une cour à la fois ardente et respectueuse.[3]

Au cours de ses pérégrinations, le consciencieux Roland prenait de copieuses notes auxquelles il s'efforçait ensuite, mais pas toujours avec un égal succès, de mettre de l'ordre. C'est que le don de la composition et une certaine élégance littéraire, qui eussent mis en valeur l'indéniable intérêt de ses observations, lui faisaient presque totalement défaut. Aussi ses *Lettres de Suisse et d'Italie*, quoique soigneusement révisées et remaniées par mme Roland qui, elle, ne manquait ni de talent ni de suite dans les idées, n'obtinrent-elles pas le succès que leur auteur avait escompté.

Une certaine lourdeur d'allure, un ton généralement trop raisonneur et d'assez longues digressions, qui ne se rachètent pas par l'esprit ou la finesse, découragèrent sans doute le public contemporain, dont le goût était accoutumé à des récits de voyages piquants et alertes.[4] Certes les opinions de Roland, en

[3] voir *Le Mariage de madame Roland. Trois années de correspondance amoureuse, 1777-1780*, éd. A. Join-Lambert (Paris 1896) et *Roland et Marie Phlipon: lettres d'amour (1777 à 1780)*, éd. Cl. Perroud (Paris 1909).

[4] le récit que mme Roland fera d'un voyage en Angleterre en 1784 et celui qu'elle fera, en 1787, d'un voyage en Suisse, sans être de parfaits chefs-d'œuvre du genre, possèdent néanmoins des qualités de style et une vivacité d'allure qui font défaut aux relations plus pondérées de son mari. Voir Gita May, 'Eighteenth-century England as seen by a disciple of the *Philosophes*', *French Studies* (juillet 1965), xix.253-265, et le chapitre VII, 'La

matière politique et religieuse, étaient audacieuses à souhait. Mais à l'encontre d'un Montesquieu ou d'un Voltaire, Roland ne possédait pas le secret de revêtir sa pensée d'une forme qui éveille et retient l'attention du lecteur. Sa phrase, souvent sèche ou embarrassée, reste celle d'un polygraphe plus sérieux que doué. Il faut quelquefois passer outre un art du récit inégal pour apprécier cet ouvrage, dont Michelet a dit que c'était 'le voyage d'Italie le plus instructif de tous ceux qu'on a faits au XVIIIe siècle.'[5]

Il arrive cependant que le reportage de Roland se hausse à la qualité littéraire des plus illustres modèles du genre; et ceci est éminemment le cas des pages consacrées à Voltaire, à son entourage et à son mode de vie à Ferney. L'esprit et l'imagination échauffés par le spectacle fascinant de son génial sujet, Roland abandonne sa coutumière raideur et dépeint, à l'aide de touches vives et évocatrices, les contours d'une physionomie et d'un caractère extraordinairement mobiles.

On sait que l'opinion publique au XVIIIe siècle ne restait pas un jour sans s'occuper de Voltaire. Exalté et décrié avec une égale véhémence par ses partisans et détracteurs, il avait fait l'objet de discussions animées entre Roland et mlle Phlipon qui, elle, s'était d'abord mise à l'école de Voltaire, mais s'était considérablement refroidie à son égard depuis qu'elle avait eu la fulgurante révélation de Rousseau. Tout en partageant, du moins dans une certaine mesure, le parti-pris rousseauiste de son amie, Roland n'en conservait pas moins un sentiment d'admiration et de loyauté pour le patriarche de Ferney. Désireux de le juger objectivement, on le voit aussi avide de recueillir ces traits et détails qui éclairent la nature profonde d'un homme. Tout en professant son respect pour le brillant génie de Voltaire, mlle Phlipon avait émis des doutes sur son caractère. Il y avait donc là de quoi piquer la curiosité du voyageur et ses dons d'observateur et de critique. Et il

Suisse vue par une préromantique', *De Jean-Jacques Rousseau à madame Roland.*

[5] *Histoire de la Révolution française*, éd. G. Walter (Paris 1952), i.661.

était loin d'oublier que tout ce qu'il aurait à dire de son hôte ne manquerait pas d'intéresser prodigieusement sa charmante et savante lectrice. C'est d'ailleurs par un docte et grave compliment, d'où sont bannis les traditionnels éloges et galanteries, qu'il lui dédie ses *Lettres*; et cette dédicace mérite d'être citée, car elle donne une idée assez claire du ton qui régissait les rapports entre Roland et la future égérie des Girondins: 'Grâce à l'amitié que vous me témoignez, et aux talents qui vous distinguent, rien ne peut m'arrêter en vous écrivant. Vous ne blâmerez ni mon style, ni mes écarts: vous aimez les arts et les lettres; plusieurs langues vous sont familières; les sciences ne vous le sont pas moins: et si je ne puis souvent vous parler comme un savant, du moins pourrai-je toujours vous parler comme à un savant'.

La première fois que Roland visita Voltaire fut au cours d'un voyage précédent en Suisse dont il inséra le récit dans les *Lettres*. Nous y voyons qu'il passa à Ferney en août 1769, et se présenta muni d'une recommandation de Cideville,[6] le fidèle ami de collège de Voltaire. Malheureusement, celui-ci était indisposé ce jour-là, ce qui n'est guère étonnant, une santé naturellement délicate, jointe aux inévitables maux de la vieillesse, ne laissant au patriarche de Ferney guère de répit.

Un 'secrétaire' (qui n'est pas autrement identifié et qui pourrait bien être Wagnière) s'empara du voyageur et lui fit les honneurs du palais et des jardins. Roland admira dûment la galerie de tableaux, la bibliothèque, la salle de spectacles, l'église avec sa fameuse inscription, *Deo erexit Voltaire*, les terres et les champs bien cultivés grâce à l'influence et aux soins du maître de céans. Mais ce qui semble surtout frapper le visiteur c'est le témoignage unanime et tout spontané des villageois qui chantent à l'envi les louanges d'un seigneur qui les comble de ses bienfaits: 'Ce grand homme de lettres s'adonne aussi à l'agriculture; il entretient plusieurs charrues indépendamment de celles de ses fermiers. Le pays lui doit des défrichements, des plantations considérables: il a

[6] conseiller au parlement de Rouen, où Roland vécut et travailla dans l'administration des manufactures de 1754 à 1764.

fait faire des essais sur de nouveaux procédés: il distribue tout, préside à tout, et fait beaucoup de bien. Il aide l'indigent, secourt les nécessiteux, facilite les mariages, etc. Tous les paysans que nous avons rencontrés çà et là en allant et venant, sans les connoître, ni en être connus, sans qu'ils sussent où nous allions, ni d'où nous venions, nous en ont parlé ainsi; personne dans le pays ne varie sur ces faits' (i.132).

Homme de lettres lui-même, Roland était naturellement curieux de savoir comment Voltaire composait ses ouvrages. Le même secrétaire obligeant lui apprit que Voltaire jetait ses idées sur le papier, faisait disposer ces matériaux détachés dans des portefeuilles et, lorsqu'il voulait donner de l'ordre à un sujet qu'il méditait, liait les divers éléments qui lui semblaient bien assortis. A ce propos, Roland cite l'accusation de Piron, ennemi acharné de Voltaire, selon laquelle celui-ci travaillait par accès et 'en marqueterie'. Sous le commentaire du voyageur percent, outre une propension naturelle à porter des jugements sévères, une secrète envie — compréhensible d'ailleurs — de l'auteur laborieux dont les efforts n'étaient guère récompensés à l'égard de l'écrivain prolifique et acclamé dans toute l'Europe. Mesquinerie de l'homme de lettres qui jalouse le succès d'un confrère qui a mieux réussi? Peut-être. La critique est sans doute injuste; mais elle n'est pas sans comporter une part de vérité: 'Quand on veut faire beaucoup et que l'on croit que c'est mettre à profit tout le temps, de n'en point perdre, on coud bien, mais la couture paroît; et entre les tirades de génie et pleines de feu, l'esprit pèse et l'âme quelquefois languit; il faut une étonnante abondance, un sentiment toujours brûlant, une ardeur sans cesse dévorante, avec un esprit bien juste, et une âme extrêmement forte, pour peindre constamment avec véhémence, pour toujours entraîner l'esprit et le cœur, et toujours commander à l'un par l'autre' (i.134).

Le 30 septembre 1769, Roland se présenta à nouveau à Ferney, et, plus heureux que la première fois, fut accueilli par le grand homme lui-même qui, en hôte affable et courtois, interrompit ses travaux pour tenir compagnie au visiteur: 'M. de Voltaire venant

au-devant de nous, tendant les bras, et faisant allusion à sa vieillesse; *vous voyagez*, nous a-t-il dit, *comme Ulysse dans le pays des ombres*. Il nous a mené promener dans ses jardins. D'abord il nous a parlé de nous-mêmes, avec beaucoup de politesse et d'agrément: puis de ses goûts et de ses amusements champêtres, nous en montrant les objets. Il a passé ensuite à l'état de la littérature en France; à l'utilité des académies: il a parlé de la cour, du gouvernement, des mœurs; des petits auteurs; de l'ineptie, ou de la cruauté (ce sont ses termes) des Magistrats d'Abbeville dans l'affaire du Chevalier de *la Barre*, sur laquelle la Czarine, lui écrivant, appeloit ses Juges *les bourreaux de la Barre*; de l'étendue des vues, de la sagesse du gouvernement, et des vœux qu'il faisait pour le succès des armes de cette princesse, avec qui il est en correspondance très-étroite; de l'affaire des *Calas*; du temps qu'il les avoit gardés chez lui, du bien qu'il leur avoit fait: nous faisant remarquer des bas blancs qu'il avoit aux jambes, que lui et eux avoient fabriqués ensemble, de la soie de son cru; de l'affaire des *Sirvens*, qu'il avoit suivie avec la même chaleur, les ayant eus très long-temps chez lui, etc.; des Prêtres enfin, des Moines, de la religion, des momeries, du fanatisme, et sur-tout de la philosophie, qui a entré et présidé à tout' (i.137-138).

On voit, d'après cette énumération tumultueuse et légèrement malicieuse, quel prodigieux effet de débordante activité intellectuelle Voltaire produisait sur ceux qui avaient l'occasion de l'observer de près. Tous les éléments essentiels de sa personnalité, toutes ses préoccupations et obsessions se retrouvent dans ces impressions notées sur le vif: impétuosité, générosité, vanité, sens aigu de la publicité, anticléricalisme, humour, humanisme. Voltaire se laisse emporter par sa verve, par la fulgurante vivacité de son esprit, laissant son interlocuteur ébahi et quelque peu abruti devant cette abondance verbale.

Abordant ensuite la physionomie physique et morale de son sujet, Roland réussit à tracer du vieillard émacié mais toujours alerte un portrait remarquablement bien enlevé, où sont dûment relevés tous les traits familiers de l'illustre modèle — de la lèvre

inférieure proéminente aux jambes maigres mais agiles. Une extraordinaire intensité de vie se dégage de cette esquisse, et il est évident que la santé déclinante du patriarche de Ferney n'affectait en rien son humeur combative et son pouvoir de séduction: 'M. de Voltaire a, nous a-t-il dit, 76 ans passés. Il est grand, mince, maigre, décharné: le menton et la mâchoire inférieure poussent en avant; mais sa figure est animée; ses yeux sont pleins de feu. Il porte toujours la tête baissée; et, à chaque fois qu'il parle, ce qu'il fait toujours très-haut et avec action, il la relève avec vivacité. Son appétit s'affoiblit, ou plutôt se délabre de jour en jour, et l'oblige à de fréquents remèdes: il mange cependant, avec appétit, un peu d'une chose, un peu d'une autre, comme par abstraction, mettant de la promptitude à tout, sur-tout dans sa marche; car il a les jambes très-agiles, quoique minces comme des flûtes; dispos comme je n'ai vu personne de cet âge. Il a de plus la mémoire aussi ferme, la présence d'esprit aussi nette, le jugement aussi sain, le tact aussi délicat, l'ambition et l'amour de la gloire aussi effrénés, le sel de l'epigramme aussi piquant, le coup de patte aussi serré, l'impatience dans la contradiction aussi cruelle, le despotisme dans ses jugements aussi terrible, la façon de penser aussi forte, la manière de la rendre aussi libre, que ses discours et ses écrits l'ont fait voir dans tous les temps' (i.139).

Il n'est jusqu'aux fantaisies vestimentaires de Voltaire qui n'aient frappé l'œil observateur de Roland. Voltaire ne se gênait pas de recevoir du monde en robe de chambre et bonnet de nuit. Mais même dans cet accoutrement, et malgré sa proverbiale maigreur, il faisait une imposante figure: 'Le jour où nous le vîmes, il étoit élégamment mis; beau linge, fines dentelles, gros nœud de ruban rose à son bonnet, bas de soie blancs, pantoufles de maroquin rouge, et superbe robe de chambre de perse des Indes, à fond blanc' (i.143).

Au cours de son entretien avec Voltaire, Roland nota également la gaieté juvénile de son hôte, sa parole chaleureuse et intarissable et sa susceptibilité aux flatteries adroites. Au reste, les secrétaires, ainsi que tout le domestique, témoignaient au maître de la

maison une affectueuse vénération: 'C'est un Dieu vivant et agissant dans son temple, qui, par le ton, et d'un regard, prescrit le culte et la forme des hommages qu'il exige' (i.142). Et cette conduite paraissait bien dictée par le cœur plus que par le devoir, Voltaire possédant évidemment le secret de se faire aimer et obéir.

Roland fut au comble du bonheur lorsque Voltaire l'invita à dîner en sa compagnie. Durant le repas, la conversation ne cessa d'être animée, la chère fut des plus délicates, il n'y avait que cinq à table et Roland fut placé (marque d'honneur à laquelle il fut loin d'être insensible) 'aux côtés de M. de Voltaire' (i.143). Pendant le dîner, on apporta à Voltaire son courrier de la journée, et il demanda aussitôt à ses invités la permission de le dépouiller. On reconnaît, par ce trait, le correspondant infatigable et toujours à l'affût des dernières nouvelles de Paris et d'Europe. Sans interrompre la conversation, il fit appeler un secrétaire (Wagnière?) et lui donna, à voix basse, quelques ordres et instructions.

Après le dîner, Voltaire proposa une partie d'échecs, ce qui n'est guère étonnant puisque c'était un de ses passe-temps favoris. Roland, qui s'attendait à ce que son hôte jouât avec la même habileté qu'il faisait des vers, fut assez surpris de le voir perdre rapidement. On fit ensuite une autre promenade, plus longue que celle du matin. Dans le jardin et le parc de Ferney, Roland put voir l'homme attaché à son sol, inspectant amoureusement ses carrés et ses plates-bandes, jouissant pleinement du fruit de son labeur: 'Il n'y a pas une pierre qu'il n'ait placée, un arbre qu'il n'ait planté . . . et il parle de tout cela avec la plus grande satisfaction' (i.146). Mais Roland d'ajouter cette observation curieusement prophétique: 'Rien ne seroit capable de l'arracher à son cher Ferney, si ce n'est peut-être cette malheureuse gloire d'auteur qui le dévorera irrésistiblement jusqu'au tombeau' (i.146).

Le rousseauiste chez Roland reprenant ici ses droits, il exprime une pensée qui ne pouvait manquer d'obtenir l'approbation de son amie: 'La récolte étoit pendante et dans sa maturité: la nature étaloit aux yeux la récompense et la joie du cultivateur. Quoique M. de Voltaire s'y soit montré singulièrement sensible; quoiqu'il

ait comparé très-ingénieusement les douceurs de la vie champêtre à la turbulente agitation du monde, il ne m'en a pas plus fait croire à son bonheur; il le fait trop dépendre de ce monde, auquel il tient trop encore' (i.146). Ce reproche, qui est d'ailleurs moins fondé sur quelque observation concrète que sur un sentiment intuitif de Roland, reflète fidèlement l'idéal du bonheur dans la retraite rustique, dans d'agréables et utiles occupations et dans la pratique de la bienfaisance. Et c'est dans *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, ce roman ridiculisé par Voltaire mais vénéré par la future mme Roland, qu'était exalté ce style de vie heureuse et obscure auquel aspiraient les âmes sensibles. Or la retraite de Voltaire était trop voyante et tapageuse; elle avait trop l'allure d'une fête, d'un perpétuel spectacle, pour convaincre de son authenticité des esprits imbus de rousseauisme comme notre visiteur. D'où ce reproche que le patriarche de Ferney trahissait un imparfait détachement des artifices et agitations du monde.

Même en exil, Voltaire continue à faire figure de grand seigneur et d'habile courtisan. Combien plus émouvante et édifiante devait paraître l'humble et silencieuse retraite d'un Rousseau! Aussi est-ce d'un œil amusé et quelque peu ironique que Roland observe ce légendaire personnage se démenant dans un cadre bucolique et prônant les joies d'une existence simple et proche de la terre. Devant cette bruyante parade champêtre Roland reste quelque peu sceptique, et le grand homme jouant avec conviction son rôle de gentilhomme campagnard lui semble à la fois sublime et ridicule.

Revenu à Ferney une troisième fois en août 1773, Roland note d'abord que le village s'est transformé depuis 1769 en véritable bourgade qui, 'outre les charrons, menuisiers, charpentiers, maçons, tailleurs, cordonniers, aubergistes, etc., renferme déjà plus de deux-cents ouvriers en horlogerie' (i.173). Mais Roland apprit, à son grand regret, qu'il ne pourrait revoir Voltaire, celui-ci venant de commettre une imprudence presque fatale: 'Comptant trop sur un estomac affoibli et délabré, il s'est vu, la nuit dernière, à deux doigts de la mort, pour avoir mangé une caille. Tout a été

mis en l'air pour avoir les médecins de Gex et de Genève, et le village est dans la désolation' (i.173). Il était à présent hors de danger, mais, considérablement affaibli par cette indigestion, avait reçu l'ordre formel de garder le lit et de ne recevoir personne.

Mme Denis reçut néanmoins le voyageur et causa quelque temps avec lui, lui faisant surtout part de l'horrible frayeur que lui avait causée l'indisposition de son oncle. Elle prit congé de Roland après lui avoir donné la permission de se promener à sa guise dans la maison et les jardins. Ayant du temps à lui, Roland entreprit de questionner les gens au sujet de leur maître et, évidemment curieux des sentiments religieux de Voltaire dans des situations où ces sentiments étaient mis à l'épreuve, il désirait se renseigner sur le comportement du philosophe devant l'imminence de la mort. Les ennemis de Voltaire répandaient, en effet, le bruit que Voltaire vivait dans la crainte perpétuelle de sa fin prochaine. Un commensal de la maison dont le nom est passé sous silence pour des raisons de discrétion mais qui, selon Roland, avait le privilège d'approcher Voltaire 'du plus près', lui apprit que, dans ces moments qui s'annonçaient comme les derniers, son maître était grave, mélancolique même, mais que, tout en se montrant vivement affecté de la perte de cette vie, ne paraissait nullement se préoccuper de l'autre, et endurait son mal patiemment et sans se plaindre (i.174).

Roland était également curieux de savoir où en étaient les démêlés que Voltaire avait dès longtemps avec Rousseau, et la version qui lui fut donnée de cette célèbre querelle mérite d'être signalée. On lui parla d'abord de la fameuse lettre sur la providence (1756) où, remerciant Voltaire de son envoi — par personne interposée, il est vrai — des poèmes sur la *Loi naturelle* et sur le *Désastre de Lisbonne*, Rousseau se déclare enchanté du premier, mais, prenant parti contre le second, adresse d'éloquentes observations critiques à son auteur. Cette réponse de Jean Jacques 'avoit sans doute ulcéré le cœur de M. de Voltaire, peu accoutumé à des contradictions qu'on ne pouvoit réfuter par des raisons, ou ridiculiser par des plaisanteries' (i.175). Et Roland ajoute ce

commentaire satirique: 'Il est à croire que ce tort fut impardonnable' (i.175).

Mais, toujours d'après le même commensal qui répondait si complaisamment aux interrogations de Roland, Voltaire oublia, dans un mouvement de compassion et de générosité, ses différends avec Rousseau lorsque lui parvint la nouvelle du décret de prise de corps lancé, à Paris et à Genève, contre l'auteur de l'*Emile* et du *Contrat social*. Emu devant une telle persécution, Voltaire offre l'hospitalité à son ancien ennemi. Malheureusement ce noble geste est gâté par les termes dans lesquels est conçue l'invitation à venir se réfugier à Ferney: 'Il lui offre sa maison, sa table, sa société; mais il le fait en homme plein de sa supériorité, voyant des torts qu'il fait connoître, des malheurs qu'on s'étoit attirés, des besoins sans espoir d'assistance, qu'il vouloit bien prévenir. L'homme, digne du *moi* de *Médée*, répondit en peu de mots, qu'il n'estimoit pas assez la personne pour accepter les bienfaits et qu'il ne voulait rien lui devoir. . . . Si le premier crime fut irrémissible, celui-ci étoit punissable des foudres de Jupiter. De là les plaisanteries, les sarcasmes, les injures; de là *la guerre de Genève*. Vous ne saviez pas cette anecdote, ni moi non plus: je l'ai apprise *sub tecto magistri*; elle mériteroit bien un petit coin dans l'histoire des honnêtetés littéraires' (i.176).

Ce témoignage soulève, en effet, une question intéressante. Voltaire a-t-il effectivement proposé un asile à Jean Jacques en 1762 et essuyé un fier refus de la part de ce dernier? S'il y eut un échange de lettres, comme l'affirme Roland sur l'assurance d'un commensal digne de foi, toute trace directe, dans la correspondance de Voltaire et de Rousseau, semble en avoir disparu.

Et pourtant d'autres témoins et visiteurs, notamment l'avocat genevois Végobre, le prince de Ligne et Wagnière lui-même, racontent, avec de légères variantes, la même anecdote. D'après Végobre, un témoin oculaire et un honnête homme 'sans imagination' dont la parole ne saurait par conséquent être mise en doute, Voltaire fut tellement touché lorsqu'on lui fit lecture de l'histoire détaillée des difficultés de l'auteur de la profession de foi du

vicaire savoyard qu'il n'y tint plus: 'Il se mit à fondre en larmes, et de ce ton de voix moitié solennel, moitié sépulcral qui lui était propre, il s'écria à diverses reprises: "Qu'il vienne! qu'il vienne! Je le recevrai à bras ouverts: il sera ici plus maître que moi; je le traiterai comme mon propre fils".' Et le poète Chabanon affirme à son tour avoir vu la lettre de Voltaire à Rousseau décrété, ainsi que la république négative de ce dernier. Enfin Wagnière, qui est peut-être le commensal dont Roland tait si discrètement le nom, va même jusqu'à attester que son maître fit transcrire sept copies de sa lettre au fugitif et qu'il les envoya dans diverses directions dans l'espoir qu'au moins un des exemplaires arriverait à destination.

Il va sans dire qu'une telle version des événements est tout à l'honneur de Voltaire. Mais mérite-t-elle notre crédit? Prenant appui sur les témoignages que nous venons de citer, Gustave Desnoiresterres et Gaston Maugras ne révoquent pas l'anecdote en doute.[7] D'après eux, Voltaire fit des avances à Rousseau en 1762, et celles-ci furent repoussées ou restèrent sans réponse. Ces deux historiens littéraires, comme tous les autres commentateurs de Voltaire et de Rousseau, ignorent d'ailleurs le texte de Roland.

Plus récemment, George R. Havens, dans un article où sont finement analysés les rapports entre Voltaire et Rousseau, ne fait aucune allusion à la possibilité d'une invitation du patriarche de Ferney au citoyen de Genève.[8] Décrivant à son tour l'attitude de Voltaire à l'égard de Rousseau en 1762, Jean Guéhenno la résume en ces termes: 'Jean-Jacques soupçonnait Voltaire et le gouvernement de la France, plus particulièrement Choiseul, d'être à la source de ses tribulations avec Genève, sa patrie. Nous n'en avons aucune preuve. Pour Voltaire, il est sûr que sa malice dut prendre plaisir à voir dans quelles difficultés le *citoyen* était avec sa patrie, mais il ne les provoqua pas. Il semble bien qu'il s'amusa seulement

[7] voir Gustave Desnoiresterres, *Voltaire* (Paris 1874), vi.319-324, et Gaston Maugras, *Voltaire et J.-J. Rousseau* (Paris 1886), pp.216-218.

[8] 'Voltaire, Rousseau and the *Lettre sur la providence*', *Publications of the Modern language association of America* (1944), lix.109-130.

de cette querelle de dévots'.[9] Norman Torrey, d'autre part, tout en adhérant, lui aussi, à la thèse d'une stricte neutralité de la part de Voltaire en 1762, prête cependant à celui-ci des sentiments plus louables et généreux que ceux décrits par Guéhenno.[10]

Et, en effet, tout lecteur impartial et tant soit peu attentif de la correspondance de Voltaire ne manquera pas de percevoir, derrière les plaisanteries et le ton délibérément désinvolte qui marquent les allusions aux dernières mésaventures de Jean-Jacques, un ensemble complexe d'émotions où percent une involontaire admiration et une certaine compassion, et d'où toute haine véritable est totalement absente. Certes, les épithètes insultantes et méprisantes ne manquent guère. Mais c'est surtout le douloureux regret de n'avoir pas réussi à ramener ce 'fou' à la raison et à la bonne cause qui semble motiver les expressions de colère et de désapprobation de Voltaire durant cette époque. 'Puis que ce bâtard du chien de Diogene est malheureux, il faut lui pardonner,' écrit-il à Gabriel Cramer le 12 juin 1762, ajoutant cette arrière-pensée pleine de mélancolie et d'amertume: 'C'est un homme qui ne convient ny dans une république ny dans un royaume ny dans une société' (Best.9706). Le 25 juin, il écrit au comte et à la comtesse d'Argental: 'Mes divins anges, Jean Jaques est un fou à lier qui a manqué à tous ses amis, et qui n'avait pas encore manqué à madame de Luxembourg. S'il s'était contenté d'attaquer l'infâme, il aurait trouvé partout des défenseurs, car l'infâme est bien décrié. Il a trouvé le secret d'offenser le gouvernement de la bourgade de Geneve en se tuant de l'exalter. On a brûlé ses rêveries dans la bourgade et on l'a décrété de prise de corps comme à Paris. . . . Je suis fâché de tout cela' (Best.9725). Et à Damilaville il écrit le 31 juillet suivant: 'On ne trouve plus ici aucun contrat insocial de J. J. et sa personne est cachée entre deux rochers de Neufchâtel. Oh! comme nous aurions chéri ce fou, s'il n'avait pas été un faux frère! et qu'il a été un grand sot d'injurier les seuls hommes qui pouvaient lui pardonner!'

[9] *Jean-Jacques (1758-1778)* (Paris 1952), p.109.

[10] *The Spirit of Voltaire* (New York 1938), pp.109-111.

(Best.9812) Cette dernière exclamation est particulièrement troublante; elle est trop spontanée pour qu'on puisse en douter la sincérité et l'authenticité; elle semble bien partir d'une impulsion à la fois affectueuse et douloureuse.

Mais Voltaire s'ouvre-t-il sur le propos qui nous intéresse, sinon directement dans cette fameuse et introuvable lettre mentionnée par Roland, du moins dans d'autres missives qui pourraient confirmer ou infirmer l'hypothèse d'une offre d'hospitalité? Il ne laisse pas, en effet, d'insinuer à plusieurs reprises qu'il n'avait tenu qu'à Rousseau d'accepter une telle proposition, mais que, dans son fol orgueil et à son propre dam, Jean Jacques s'était toujours obstiné à repousser toute tentative de rapprochement. Même après avoir reçu l'éloquente et brutale lettre de rupture du 17 juin 1760 (Best.6238), Voltaire parle avec nostalgie de ce qui aurait pu être si Rousseau avait été un peu plus accommodant. A Damilaville il confie cette pensée nostalgique: 'C'est un étrange fou . . . il m'offense de gaieté de cœur moy qui luy avais offert, non pas un azile, mais ma maison où il aurait vécu comme mon frère' (Best.8903). Et tout au long de l'année 1762, il suit avec un intérêt soutenu toutes les nouvelles concernant l'écrivain proscrit. L'affaire Calas, il est vrai, absorbe presque toute son énergie et sa pensée pendant cette période, mais s'il parle des tribulations du citoyen de Genève sur un ton agressivement léger et satirique, il n'en trahit pas moins une réelle anxiété devant les multiples dangers qui menacent le 'faux frère'.

C'est avec agacement et humeur, mais aussi avec une tristesse mal cachée, que Voltaire s'évertue à rappeler à ses correspondants les marques de bonne volonté qu'il donnait, dès longtemps, à Rousseau, sans être payé de retour. Dans une lettre à Charles Pictet du 25 juin 1762, il fait clairement allusion à une offre d'hospitalité faite en vain: 'Je suis si éloigné d'être son ennemi que je lui ai fait offrir, il y a quelques années, une de mes maisons pour rétablir sa santé' (Best.9730). Le 15 septembre 1762, c'est au tour d'Alembert d'être mis au fait de cette proposition: 'Vous voyez que ce pauvre homme est fou: pour peu qu'il eût eu un reste de

sens commun, il serait venu au château de Tournay, que je lui offrais; c'est une terre entièrement libre. Il y eût bravé également et les prêtres ariens et l'imbécile Omer, et tous les fanatiques; mais son orgueil ne lui a pas permis d'accepter les bienfaits d'un homme qu'il avait outragé' (Best.9892).

Mais c'est dans une lettre à David Hume du 24 octobre 1766 que Voltaire apporte le plus de précisions aux démarches qu'il s'enorgueillit d'avoir faites auprès de Jean Jacques: 'Quand je sus qu'il avait beaucoup d'ennemis à Paris, qu'il aimait comme moi la retraite, & que je présumai qu'il pouvait rendre quelques services à la philosophie, je lui fis proposer par mr Marc Chapuis, citoyen de Genève, dès l'an 1759, une maison de campagne appelée l'*Hermitage*, que je venais d'acheter. Il fut si touché de mes offres, qu'il m'écrivit ces propres mots (Best.6238): "Monsieur, Je ne vous aime point; vous corrompez ma république, en donnant des spectacles dans vôtre château de Tournay, &c." ' (Best.12735). Consciemment ou inconsciemment, Voltaire télescope ici les événements de 1755 à 1760. L'invitation qu'il se complaît à décrire ne semble être nulle autre que celle faite, non en 1759, mais bien en 1755, dans la célèbre missive du 30 août de cette année, où il remerciait l'auteur du *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* pour l'envoi de son 'livre contre le genre humain'. Et, rappelons-le, c'est en termes facétieux et condescendants que Voltaire conseillait à Rousseau de ne plus se morfondre au sein de cette civilisation qu'il dénonçait avec tant de véhémence, et de venir s'installer à ses côtés: 'Monsieur Chapui m'apprend que votre santé est bien mauvaise. Il faudrait la venir rétablir dans l'air natal, jouir de la liberté, boire avec moy du lait de nos vaches, et brouter nos herbes' (Best.5792). En outre, ce que Voltaire décrit comme une réponse à son 'offre' d'hospitalité est en réalité la lettre de rupture de Jean Jacques (Best.6238), écrite cinq ans plus tard, le 17 juin 1760.

Y eut-il une invitation, directe ou par personne interposée, postérieure à celle — si équivoque d'ailleurs — de 1755? D'après le propre témoignage de Rousseau, l'invitation du 30 août 1755

fut la seule dont il eut jamais connaissance ou souvenance, et il en parle comme d'une plaisanterie d'assez mauvais goût plutôt que comme d'une invitation en bonne et due forme.

C'est ainsi qu'en réponse à une lettre d'un m. Du Chauvet, Rousseau fournit l'explication suivante le 5 janvier 1767: 'Jamais, ni en 1759, ni en aucun autre temps, M. Marc Chappuis ne m'a proposé, de la part de M. de Voltaire, d'habiter une petite maison appelée l'Hermitage. En 1755 M. de Voltaire, me pressant de revenir dans ma patrie, m'invitoit d'aller boire du lait de ses vaches. Je lui répondis. Sa lettre et la mienne furent publiques. Je ne me ressouviens pas d'avoir eu de sa part aucune autre invitation.'[11] Il n'est pas sans intérêt de noter, cependant, que cette affirmation, en apparence si catégorique et formelle, finit sur une note quelque peu ambiguë. En déclarant ne se souvenir d'aucune autre invitation, Rousseau se ménage-t-il, inconsciemment peut-être, une porte de sortie en cas de démenti? La chose n'est pas impossible.

Elle est d'autant plus vraisemblable que, dans une lettre de Meister du 8 juin 1764, laquelle est censée rapporter une récente conversation avec Rousseau, celui-ci, interrogé sur l'attitude du patriarche de Ferney à son égard, fait cette affirmation péremptoire: 'M. de Voltaire dit à tout le monde qu'il est fort lié avec J.J. Rousseau, qu'il lui offrit un asile chez lui lorsqu'il fut obligé de quitter la France; mais, moi, je vous dis que je n'ai aucune liaison avec m. de Voltaire et que je n'en veux point avoir'.[12] Mais la volonté tenace de Jean Jacques de garder ses distances n'exclut

[11] *Correspondance générale*, éd. Th. Dufour et P.P. Plan (Paris 1924-1934), xvi.199, lettre 3216. Pour la lettre de Chauvet à Rousseau, voir xvi.153, lettre 3181.

[12] Best.11079. M. Besterman donne cet avertissement à propos du texte de Meister (p.88): 'In this letter Meister is said to describe to an unspecified correspondent a recent conversation of his with Rousseau; it is obvious that so long a passage purporting to quote Rousseau's words must be taken with a substantial grain of salt'. La réponse de Rousseau aux interrogations de Meister semble néanmoins parfaitement vraisemblable du point de vue psychologique, bien qu'il faille tenir naturellement compte du fait que les paroles attribuées à Rousseau sont citées de mémoire.

nullement la possibilité que Voltaire ait fait auprès de lui la tentative hospitalière dont il est question. Le problème reste toujours en suspens, puisque Rousseau ne nie pas positivement avoir été invité par Voltaire au moment où il fut décrété d'arrestation en France, c'est-à-dire en 1762.

Un autre texte de Rousseau semble même confirmer, du moins négativement, la possibilité d'une telle offre. Le 20 août 1762, Rousseau, écrivant à Marcet de Mézières, conclut sa lettre par cette fière déclaration d'indépendance: 'J.J. Rousseau étoit libre à Paris a Montmorenci, il l'est à Motiers, il le sera partout hors à Genève, et il n'est point d'humeur d'aller augmenter le nombre des sujets du Poete Voltaire et qui pis est, du jongleur Tronchin.'[13] Pourquoi Rousseau, qui à cette date est encore sous le coup du déchaînement que l'*Emile* et le *Contrat social* ont soulevé dans sa ville natale et qui vient d'être chassé d'Yverdon, dans le territoire bernois, éprouve-t-il le besoin de réaffirmer avec tant de véhémence son désir de ne point accepter l'hospitalité de Voltaire? Celle-ci lui avait donc été offerte, soit directement ou par un intermédiaire? Ou tout au moins en avait-il été suffisamment question pour que Rousseau y fasse si clairement allusion?

L'hypothèse d'une proposition d'hospitalité faite par Voltaire à Rousseau en 1762 est non seulement acceptée par des historiens littéraires tels que Desnoiresterres et Maugras, elle s'accommode également avec ce que nous savons du caractère et du tempérament du patriarche de Ferney. A cet égard, Evelyn Beatrice Hall, plus connue sous son pseudonyme de S. G. Tallentyre, avait déjà eu une intuition qui nous paraît très juste lorsque, analysant l'attude de Voltaire à l'égard de Rousseau en 1762, elle souscrit à son tour à l'existence d'une telle invitation et l'explique en ces termes: 'It would have been perfectly in Voltaire's character to abuse Rousseau by every epithet in a peculiarly rich vituperative vocabulary, and to have received him with all generous hospitality and thoughtful kindness as a guest in his house for months; to

[13] *Correspondance littéraire*, viii.70.

have quarrelled with him and abused him again, and once more to have received him as a brother. After all, Voltaire was not a perfect hater. That sodden, worthless Thieriot came to Délices for a three-month visit in July, with all his treachery and ingratitude amply forgotten; and in October that very showy hero, Richelieu, who was always in money debt to Voltaire, descended upon his creditor with a suite of no fewer forty persons'.[14]

John Morley présente, lui aussi, comme un fait, mais sans le documenter sur le plan historique ou psychologique, le récit d'une tentative de rapprochement: 'Frederick offered Rousseau shelter, and so did Voltaire; but each of them disliked his work as warmly as the other. They did not understand one who, if he wrote with an eloquence that touched all hearts, repulsed friends and provoked enemies like a madman or a savage'. Tout comme l'informateur de Roland, Morley estime que le refus obstiné de Rousseau à se joindre au cercle de Voltaire et à devenir un de ses hôtes et satellites contribua de manière significative à la détérioration progressive des rapports entre les deux écrivains: 'Partly no doubt this extreme irritation was due to the insults with which Jean-Jacques had repulsed his offers of shelter and assistance'.[15]

Mais c'était complètement méconnaître le caractère de Rousseau que de s'attendre à ce qu'un tel homme acceptât une offre d'hospitalité exprimée en termes tant soit peu condescendants, voire tranquillement et inconsciemment méprisants. L'amour-propre du plébéien farouchement jaloux de son indépendance et de sa dignité ne pouvait que se froisser de ce geste magnanime de grand seigneur. Fait révélateur: Rousseau compare le ton de Voltaire à celui du comte de Montaigu, ambassadeur de France à Venise, dont il fut le secrétaire mais dont la morgue et les airs hautains le conduisirent à se quereller avec lui et à se faire chasser pour insubordination, comme un vulgaire laquais: 'Ayant répondu sans insolence, mais avec fermeté, aux brutalités de l'ambassadeur, dont le ton ressembloit assez à celui de M. de Voltaire, il me

[14] *The Life of Voltaire* (New York 1903), p.174.

[15] *Voltaire* (New York 1923), pp.347, 348.

menaça d'appeler ses gens, et de me faire jeter par les fenêtres'.[16] Et cependant, Rousseau, du moins sur la foi de Dusaulx, a rendu hommage, non seulement au talent de Voltaire, mais aussi à sa générosité, et ceci après la rupture définitive entre les deux hommes: 'Quand il en fut à Voltaire, qui l'avait si indignement outragé, au lieu de récriminations, il se plut à rendre justice entière à sa fécondité inépuisable, à la diversité de ses talents; et de son caractère il n'en dit que ces mots remarquables: — Je ne sache point d'hommes sur la terre dont les premiers mouvements aient été plus beaux que les siens.'[17]

Et, en effet, Voltaire avait la larme facile et, d'un tempérament nerveux et impulsif, s'attendrissait à la moindre provocation. Nombre de témoins ont confirmé cette propension lachrymatoire. D'une émotivité extrême, il étonnait souvent ses hôtes par d'excessives manifestations de joie ou de douleur. Et comme il avait tendance à s'enorgueillir de sa tendresse de cœur et de sa sensibilité à fleur de peau, il ne faisait aucun effort pour contrôler ou mesurer ces élans. Au contraire. En acteur accompli, il avait un sens infaillible des scènes 'sublimes'. L'on conçoit donc qu'à la nouvelle du double décret lancé contre Rousseau, il n'ait pas manqué cette occasion de mettre en valeur les qualités de cœur qu'il prisait particulièrement.

Certes, la scène de réconciliation eût été émouvante à souhait; mais elle eût été tout à l'honneur de Voltaire. Dans une de ces apothéoses dignes des compositions les plus mélodramatiques de Greuze, Rousseau se serait humblement prosterné devant le patriarche de Ferney qui, les bras grand ouverts et les yeux au ciel, aurait paternellement et bénévolement accueilli ce nouveau fils prodigue. Mais après la célèbre lettre de rupture du 17 juin 1760, où Rousseau accusait Voltaire avec une brutale et douloureuse véhémence de lui aliéner l'esprit de ses concitoyens et de lui rendre le séjour dans son pays natal intolérable, son orgueil ne

[16] *Correspondance générale*, xvi.200 (lettre de Rousseau à Chauvet du 5 janvier 1767).

[17] *De mes rapports avec J. J. Rousseau* (Paris 1798), p.101.

pouvait guère s'accommoder d'une tentative de rapprochement. Son cœur était trop gonflé de rancœurs et de ressentiments pour s'ouvrir à une tardive et douteuse démarche.

Si la version donnée par Roland — fût-elle authentique — ne change pas les données essentielles d'une célèbre inimitié, elle contribue néanmoins à montrer à quel point les contemporains de Voltaire et de Rousseau étaient conscients du drame qui opposait ces deux grands écrivains. La réaction de Roland est d'autant plus significative à cet égard que cet homme reste généralement indifférent aux détails de querelles et de personnalités littéraires. Aussi son portrait anecdotique de Voltaire n'en acquiert-il que plus de relief et d'intérêt.

Observations on the dating of certain Rousseau letters

by R. A. Leigh

In the 'Notes' appended to his review of volume i of the *Correspondance complète de Jean Jacques Rousseau* (L), dr Taylor questions the dating or attribution of some of the letters. Users of the work might perhaps welcome the assurance that I had already considered the possibilities suggested by dr Taylor, and had felt bound to reject them. The object of the following notes is to make my reasons clear. It would, of course, have been impossible to develop them all as fully in the edition itself, without distending it to an inordinate length.

I

L2: This letter could hardly raise more problems. Who wrote it? To whom was it addressed? When was it written? What is it all about?

My solutions to these problems are as follows: the letter was written by Rousseau, towards the end of the summer of 1730, probably from Lausanne, to an intimate childhood friend of his, who was also a relative (not necessarily a close one: 'cher couzin' could cover a fairly wide spectrum). This friend had run away fairly recently from his home in Geneva, and was now in Turin. The 'cher couzin' may have been Abraham Bernard, or, as I rather incline to think, Jean Pierre Fazy (whom I identify with

the young Fazy referred to in the *Rêveries*.)[1] But the 'cher couzin' may conceivably have been an adolescent connection of JJ's about whom we have no information. It emerges from the letter itself that the writer had already tried to communicate with his correspondent through 'un de mes amis', 'le fils de M. Dassier'. (The identity of this person has some bearing on the problems raised by this letter). I should add that, explained on these lines, the letter becomes quite intelligible, and fits the known facts.[2]

Dr Taylor wishes nevertheless to revert to a suggestion once made, but subsequently abandoned, by Alexis François, who first published the letter. François had supposed that the letter was written not *by* Rousseau, but *to* Rousseau, by Abraham Bernard. The letter would then relate to Rousseau's own flight from Geneva and later journey to Turin. François did not attempt to date the letter exactly, but if he were right, it could not have been written before April 1728 nor later than the summer of 1729. The most likely date would have been the earlier part of this period, and in fact François indicated 1728. This theory involves the corollary that about two years later, and for some reason left unexplained, Rousseau copied this letter into a rough notebook he was then using.

[1] previous commentators have identified JJ's playmate as Jean Salomon Fazy (1709-1782). Jean Pierre, the youngest of the three brothers Fazy, was a 'step-cousin' of JJ's, his father having married JJ's aunt, Clermonde Rousseau. She was his third wife. Jean Pierre was born in 1716 and died before 1744 in Italy. It seems likely that he had run away from home.

[2] the letter was clearly written by somebody who had recently been in and near Geneva. JJ passed through his native town early in July 1730, and spent some little time at Nyon, only a few hours away. He may also have returned to Nyon (or even to Geneva itself) in connection with the marriage of his favourite aunt, Suzanne Rousseau. She was married in Geneva on the 24th of August 1730, to Isaac Henri Goncerut, and then settled in Nyon, of which town her husband was a citizen. The presence of JJ in or near Geneva could easily have attracted the attention of his former friends and acquaintances among the apprentices of the city; and it is then that the unscrupulous 'inconnu' of the letter could have employed the 'fils de boucher' to recover the trivial debt of 10 sous which JJ was certainly in no position to pay at that time. The conversation with Dassier fils could have taken place at Geneva or Nyon, or even Lausanne.

These, then, are the two conflicting interpretations: how do they stand in relation to the facts?

1. The original of the letter is unknown. The manuscript source is a notebook which includes other autograph copies of letters by Rousseau (and no copies of letters to Rousseau), as well as some of his earliest literary sketches. All the material is in Rousseau's own writing.

2. An examination of the notebook shows that its contents may be assigned confidently to the period July 1730-July 1731, when Rousseau was living at Lausanne, Neuchâtel (twice) and Soleure (Solothurn).

3. The manuscript of the letter, though basically a fair copy, contains a number of alterations, again in Rousseau's own hand. This is the crux of the matter.

An examination of the manuscript leads inexorably to the conclusion that the person who copied the letter was also its author. Indeed, it seemed so obvious to Alexis François himself that the alterations were author's corrections that (for the short time in which he held the view that the letter was not by Rousseau) he felt driven to offer the rather surprising explanation that, in reproducing the hypothetical original which Rousseau had before him, he must have faithfully copied the cancelled phrases, the insertions, the half-finished words, the sentences which abruptly change course in mid-stream—producing in fact the eighteenth-century equivalent of a photocopy! Even to François this did not really seem very convincing. He therefore offered, rather lamely, the alternative hypothesis that JJ must have 'tâtonné en transcrivant la précieuse missive' (an explanation which does nothing at all to explain the peculiar character of the corrections). François concluded: 'Quelle que soit l'hypothèse admise, on doit convenir que le document, tel qu'il nous est parvenu, conserve quelque chose d'énigmatique' (*Annales*, xiii.184). It will be readily conceded that a problem is not solved by propounding two contradictory interpretations of the same set of facts, neither of which explains them.

Dr Taylor does not attempt to defend François's first suggestion, but falls back on the second. The letter of 'Bernard' must have been difficult to decipher, hence the corrections. Such an explanation, tenable in theory (or if the ms. had disappeared!), crumbles away to nothing when the corrections are examined one by one. Some of them are certainly compatible with the view that JJ was making a copy —a fair copy from one of his own drafts. In fact, he constantly made this type of correction when transcribing his own work. It could even be maintained that a few of the alterations are not inconsistent with the type of change he made, less frequently, when, many years later, he copied into his *Recueil* (Neuchâtel, ms. R.89-90) a selection of the letters addressed to him. But not all the corrections can be explained on this basis: and it would be enough, of course, for only one of them to be incompatible with the François-Taylor hypothesis (or any variant of it) for it to collapse altogether. Only one: but in fact there are several.

For instance, the theory requires us to suppose that, looking at Abraham Bernard's hypothetical letter, Rousseau transcribed *tu me le marque* as *tu me le reproche*, immediately noticed his mistake, crossed out *reproche* and wrote the 'correct' version *marque* on the same line before proceeding. This does not seem very plausible, especially as the real reason for the change is so obvious. Rousseau had already used the word *reproches* a few lines earlier, and wanted to avoid the repetition, which he noticed belatedly when transcribing his rough.

The theory would also have us believe that Rousseau looked at the word *la* in the 'original', transcribed it as *tout cela* (!), discovered his mistake afterwards, and then corrected it by crossing through *la* and writing *tout cela* over the line. Such meticulousness strikes one as decidedly peculiar. We must also believe that *et a écrit* was originally misread as *et il dit*; and that Rousseau, having before him [. . .] *d'argent, a ce portrait reconnois l'indignité de son procédé*, transcribed this first of all as [. . .] *d'argent, par tout cela tu peu le reco* [unfinished word]. But this is clearly

another stylistic change by the person composing the letter. Noticing that he had already used *tout cela* earlier, in eliminating the repetition he took the opportunity to recast his sentence completely.

In a word, the only way in which *all* the corrections can be accounted for is to assume that Rousseau is here transcribing a rough draft of his own and making changes as he goes along. To the above evidence we might add the 'anticipations' which the ms. contains (variants 3 and 7 listed in L2), which are also typical of JJ. He thinks ahead, and begins to write the next phrase before finishing the one he is engaged in. All in all, the evidence, especially for anyone who has studied Rousseau's transcriptions of his rough drafts, is overwhelming.

But if the evidence is so overwhelming, why is it that François (if only for a moment) should have been so unwilling to accept it, and that dr Taylor should now try to revive the theory? The answer can only be that they have both been mesmerised by the *Confessions*. The letter is obviously written by a young man to a relative and a close friend who has left Geneva clandestinely and is now in Turin. François tried to fit it, in Procrustean fashion, to the story given in the *Confessions* of JJ's own flight from Geneva, and of his childhood friendship with Abraham Bernard—which are, of course, among the most famous passages of that well-thumbed masterpiece. However, the letter has no necessary connection with JJ's flight at all. His departure from Geneva was far from being an isolated phenomenon. The adolescents of the city were constantly running away from home,[3] both before and after JJ, whether they changed their religion or not. This interesting sociological phenomenon cannot be enlarged upon here.[4] It is enough to recall, with reference to the letter in question,

[3] there were, in the space of only a few years, no less than four cases in JJ's own immediate family circle: JJ himself, his brother François, Abraham Bernard, and Jean Pierre Fazy.

[4] the traffic was a two-way one, though the illicit influx of young Protestants from France seems certainly easier to explain at first sight than the clandestine exodus of young

that Turin, the capital, constituted a natural magnet for those runaways who opted for the Kingdom of Sardinia rather than for France.

4. It should be remarked, since dr Taylor invokes the authority of Alexis François, that François himself soon recognised that his theory was untenable, and renounced it. If dr Taylor will turn to *Matériaux pour la correspondance de J.J. Rousseau* (Paris 1923), he will read on p.149, under the title 'Répertoire des Lettres dispersées avec quelques corrections de dates et de noms', the following unobtrusive, though eloquent rectification: 'A son cousin, [17]31 (et non de son cousin, [17]28).'

It should be added that the theory buried by François and exhumed by dr Taylor involves certain other difficulties:

5. The letter refers to 'un de mes amis', 'le fils de Mr. Dassier', who had very recently left Geneva for Turin. In my notes, I have tried to show that this can only be Jean Dassier, the eldest surviving son of the celebrated engraver of that name. This son (one of the few members of the family who did not become an engraver or goldsmith) did in fact settle in Turin, and made a successful career for himself there as a merchant. He was born in January 1713, and was therefore (at the time I suppose the letter to have been written) more than seventeen years old —a reasonable age for a young man to travel alone to Turin, on a journey authorised by his parents. If we suppose the letter written in 1728, Jean Dassier would have been only fifteen. (The other surviving sons were even younger). Incidentally, the identity of this person tends to confirm that the author of the letter was JJ himself. As an engraver's apprentice (which Abraham Bernard was not), JJ would naturally have got to know the Dassier children, and I have produced some additional evidence in my notes to show that the Rousseaus and the Dassiers were on friendly terms.

Genevans. This traffic assumed such proportions that the French and Genevan authorities considered regulating it by a formal international agreement which would have involved handing over the fugitives.

6. In his *Confessions* Rousseau says that after he ran away from Geneva he and Abraham Bernard neither corresponded nor saw each other again: 'Nous ne nous sommes jamais écrit ni revus'. Of course, writing more than thirty years after the event, he may have been mistaken. But it seems rather odd that he should go out of his way to make such an emphatic statement if he had not only received such an affectionate letter from Bernard, but had actually gone to the trouble of copying it out. However that may be, the testimony of the *Confessions* cannot be simply ignored. It may be wrong, but it must be taken into consideration and weighed in the balance.

7. Finally, there remains the question of motive, as in any self-respecting mystery. Why should JJ have copied Bernard's letter two years later (possibly more) into a notebook containing his own letters and early literary drafts? Dr Taylor thinks he may have done so in order to show it to Bernard's mother, his aunt Théodora, 'during his *short stay* [my italics] in Geneva in July 1730'. In a circumstantial account of his return to Geneva in the summer of 1730, Rousseau says categorically: 'En passant à Geneva [he does not say he *stayed* there] je n'allai voir personne' (*Pléiade*, i.144). Once again, he *may* have been wrong: but it is worth noting that none of the evidence in the *Confessions* actually supports dr Taylor's theory, and that what there is refutes it.[5]

[5] it is also rather puzzling that Rousseau had to copy the letter in order to show it to Bernard's mother. How much more convincing to show her the original! We could improve the theory a little by supposing that on this hypothetical visit to his aunt (which probably did not take place) she asked for the original and JJ copied it before handing it over. This, of course, leaves all the other objections intact. I also wonder what particular interest the letter would have for her. She would, of course, have been keenly interested in any letter of her son's written *after* he had disappeared. But this one, *ex hypothesi*, was written whilst he was still in Geneva. Moreover, supposing the letter were by Bernard, it would have been a gross breach of confidence to have shown it to his mother, for the writer of the letter is particularly anxious not to be suspected of complicity in the disappearance of his correspondent. In short, the theory breaks down all along the line.

II

L13: This is a letter, known only through an undated rough draft, ordering books from Barillot, the Geneva bookseller. DP placed it in the summer of 1737 (presumably in August), m. Georges Daumas (*Annales*, xxxvi.90-91) in 1735. In my edition, I place it between April and October 1736, with a preference for an earlier rather than a later date between those limits. DP did not give any reasons for their date, to which dr Taylor now wishes to revert for reasons of his own.

1. The argument turns partly on the publication dates of the most recent books ordered in the letter, but some of this evidence, which I assembled and reviewed at length in my notes, is equivocal. In opting for 1735, m. Daumas was partly influenced by the fact that some of the books in question seem to have been ordered in connection with the 'plan d'études' to which JJ refers in L11 and in the *Confessions*. The fact that, at the date of the letter, JJ's mathematical instruments had not yet arrived, seemed to m. Daumas to indicate that it was written towards the beginning of JJ's studies. However, what is known of the phasing of JJ's programme of self-education seems to me far too vague to allow this factor to decide in favour of the autumn of 1735 rather than of the spring of 1736, though it does seem to rule out anything so late as the summer of 1737. The fact that JJ was then about to depart for Montpellier also makes an order for books of this character somewhat unlikely. On the bibliographical evidence alone, one would be inclined to say that an order including so many books which were fairly recent in 1735-1736 is a pointer to that period rather than to the summer of 1737; just as, negatively, the absence of any books published in 1737 or towards the end of 1736 indicates lack of support for a later date. However, the argument for 1736 can be supported independently on other grounds.

2. Both the ceremonious tone of the letter and some of the phrases used indicate that it belongs to the beginning of JJ's

relations with the Barillots (though this is not the first letter in their correspondence). When they first became acquainted is not absolutely clear. In the *Confessions* (*Pléiade*, i.215), JJ seems to place the beginning of their relationship at some unspecified point after the death of Claude Anet (March 1734), say in 1735. After that, we are told that Barillot came to stay in Chambéry, for some little time, on his way back from Italy, bringing with him some books for JJ (i.246). When did this visit take place? 'L'hiver suivant', says JJ, the context indicating the winter of 1736-1737. In what follows, the chronology is blurred in a way characteristic of the *Confessions*: 'Barillot resta quelque tems avec nous et comme j'étois majeur depuis plusieurs mois, il fut convenu que j'irois le printems suivant à Genève redemander le bien de ma mére ou du moins la part qui m'en revenoit [. . .]'. This passage contains a number of inaccuracies. JJ did not come of age under Genevan law until 28 June 1737: far from being of age 'depuis plusieurs mois' at the time of Barillot's stay in Chambéry, he was not yet of age at all at that time: and he went to Geneva, not in the spring of 1737, but in July. However, these inaccuracies make no difference to the essential fact that Barillot's visit to Chambéry obviously brought him and JJ much closer together (by the summer of 1737, their relations were very close indeed). In view of these facts, the letter in question, with its formal and ceremonious tone, can safely be placed before Barillot's trip to Italy, say some time before the autumn of 1736. This conclusion fits in well with the date suggested by the bibliographical evidence.

3. Dr Taylor sees a difficulty in the fact (to which I drew attention in my notes) that JJ offers in this letter to 'faire son billet' in payment for the books ordered. He thinks that JJ would have been in a better position to do so *after* he had received his legacy than before. However, this is not necessarily so. As I pointed out, Charbonnel (the Chambéry tradesman and friend of mme de Warens) advanced JJ money before he came of age, presumably in anticipation of his inheritance. In JJ's will, dated 27 juin 1737 (*Pléiade*, i.1213), he recognises that he owes Charbonnel 'sept

cent livres [. . .] pour argent prêté et marchandises à luy livrées' And in the very same document, JJ bequeathes to Jacques Barillot '*outre ce qu'il luy doit* [my italics] la somme de cent livres' (*Pléiade*, i.1212). I conclude that the financial difficulty in an imaginary one, that there were several orders for books sent to Barillot between 1735 and 1737, that they were paid for in various ways, or obtained on credit, and that JJ's reference in the *Confessions* to spending part of his inheritance on books either relates to a different order (which in any case he could have given to Barillot verbally, since they were both in Geneva in July-August 1737) or could simply mean that the money had been so spent in advance of the actual payment. JJ's allusion in the letter to paying for the books by his 'billet' is indeed a further argument in support of the earlier date, since at the beginning of their relationship Barillot may not have been so willing to extend credit.

4. Finally, the paper on which the ms. is written is very similar to that used by JJ about 1735 and quite different from that used in 1737.

III

L25: This is a document printed from a draft in Rousseau's hand. It was probably addressed to the *abbé* Gabriel Arnauld, then *aumônier* to the French Resident in Geneva, and from time to time *chargé d'affaires* in the latter's absence. The purpose of the letter is to state the case for paying out to JJ and his father, as next of kin, the share in Suzanne Rousseau's estate due to François Rousseau, JJ's elder brother, 'missing' and now claimed to be dead beyond any reasonable doubt. I have dated this document 'vers le 3 mars 1739'. Dr Taylor sees a difficulty in the fact (to which I drew attention) that in stating his case JJ persistently exaggerates all the statistics relating to his brother—the length of time he has been missing, or during which no news has been received, and the time which has gone by since his legal majority (when he could have claimed his inheritance, if he had been alive). Dr Taylor comments: 'It is puzzling [. . .] that Rousseau's

references to the time which had elapsed since his brother left Geneva should be subject to such discrepancies, especially as the difference is some two years in most cases. Such errors would weaken any legal claim JJR might make. The possibilities of dating this letter *c.*1741 should not be discounted, though 1739 is perhaps preferable'.

There are two principal misunderstandings here. In the first place it is somewhat misleading to say that the discrepancies are 'some two years in most cases': nor does it follow that placing the letter in 1741 eliminates them. On the contrary, in one respect at least it makes matters rather worse. Secondly, JJ was not, of course, making a legal claim at all, and this puts a rather different complexion on the matter.

First of all, the discrepancies. The following statements occur in the letter:

1. *In [July] 1737, François Rousseau had been of age for nine years.* This, of course, was not so: François Rousseau came of age under Genevan law on 15 March 1730. In July 1737, therefore, he had been of age for a little over seven years. It is important to notice that this error, being a measurement of time between two fixed dates, remains constant, *whatever date we adopt for the letter.*

2. *At the date of the letter, François Rousseau had been absent for twenty years.* This statement was untrue both in 1739 and in 1741. It is not known exactly when François Rousseau ran away from Geneva. His presence in the city is last attested for certain on 21 October 1722. If the letter was written in March 1739, the error was three years and four months at most, perhaps a little less. Placing the letter in 1741 would reduce the error to one year, if a date in October could be adopted. But the only possible date in 1741 (and even that is not very likely) would lie between April and July: and so the error begins to creep up again. In any case, dr Taylor's motive for changing the date is to eliminate the error, not to reduce it: and this could only be done by shifting the letter to November 1742 at the earliest. That date is impossible, as JJ was then in Paris. In point of fact, both 1741 and 1742 seem to be

ruled out on other grounds (see below). I conclude that 'twenty' years in this context is simply a good large round number.

3. *At the date of the letter, nothing had been heard of François Rousseau for nineteen years*, since he had stopped writing to his family about a year after leaving Geneva. This is simply a consequential error, and does not call for special comment.

4. *At the date of the letter, François Rousseau had been of age for eleven years*. In March 1739 this was almost two years out. By placing the letter in April 1741 we could eliminate this inaccuracy (and this would be the *only* inaccuracy eliminated by so dating the letter). But it would still leave intact the other inaccuracy mentioned in 1 above, *relating to the same event*. By placing the letter in March 1739 we obtain a consistent inaccuracy of two years whenever JJ speaks of his brother's legal coming of age, a mistake explicable on the assumption that he made a slip of two years in his brother's date of birth. By placing the letter in 1741, we obtain accuracy in one instance and a two years' inaccuracy in another, *in relation to the same event*.

5. *JJ says that twelve years have elapsed since he himself left 'la maison paternelle'* (he means, of course, since he ran away from Geneva: Isaac Rousseau had not lived with his children since 1722). Twelve years would bring us to March 1740: this is a year too many, if the letter is placed in 1739, but a year too few if the letter is placed in 1741. Since the letter as a whole gives the impression that JJ is overestimating all these time intervals, this again on balance is an argument for 1739.

I conclude that it is impossible to find *any* date for the letter which would eliminate *all* the inaccuracies it contains. The choice of 1739, however, though not arrived at on these grounds, does in fact eliminate an important inconsistency.

There are, however, quite decisive grounds for rejecting 1741 (or any other alternative date), and sticking firmly to 1739. Removing the letter from 1739 would tear a large hole in the general fabric of the correspondence, and create insoluble difficulties elsewhere. It is obvious that no. 25 is closely bound up

with nos 26-29, a whole series of letters and documents concerned with mme de Warens's financial difficulties and with her attempts to raise the wind in one way or another. She has obviously given JJ very plainly to understand that he must now stand on his own feet or even bring in something to offset the cost of his keep over the years (in his will of June 1737, he had made her his residuary legatee and recognised that he owed her 2000 *livres* for 'ten' years *pension*—another considerable inaccuracy or approximation).[6] It is no doubt this pressure which leads him to see if he cannot lay hands on his brother's inheritance (no. 25), to apply for a pension from the king of Sardinia (no. 28), and even to submit in his own name a scheme which mme de Warens had probably worked out herself for a system of freight transport over the Alps (no. 29). (The final blow will come when she finds him a job which will take him away from Les Charmettes altogether; cp. no. 35). Nos 26 and 27 are letters to mme de Warens about the schemes covered by nos 25, 28 and 29.

All these documents (some known through manuscripts, others through early printed texts) hang together. No. 26 refers to no. 25 and to an early draft of no. 28, no. 27 refers to no. 28 and (very probably) to no. 29. In particular, there are close resemblances between no. 25 and no. 28 (the request for a royal pension addressed to the Governor of Savoy). In no. 25, JJ pleads that he is too ill to earn his living (has one foot in the grave, in fact), though he has tried hard to make himself self-supporting by cultivating his talents and has managed to attract the favour of influential benefactors. He can no longer live on the charity of mme de Warens, since her resources have been exhausted by her generosity to others. Exactly the same arguments recur in no. 28. It is obvious that they were both written at roughly the same time

[6] JJ had first set eyes on mme de Warens on 21 March 1728. From that day to the making of his will, nine years and three months had elapsed. But from that period, the eighteen months spent in Turin would have to be deducted, together with at least another year spent in Lausanne, Neuchâtel, Soleure and on the road (1730-1731). So the ten years' *pension* should be reduced to less than seven.

from Les Charmettes, and before JJ obtained his post with the Mablys. Indeed, the close resemblance between JJ's pleas in nos 25 and 28 and certain passages of the *Avertissement* of *Le Verger des Charmettes* makes it likely that all three documents were roughly contemporary. I should add that the paper of no. 29 is exactly the same as that of no. 25, and that the handwriting is very similar. Since I presume that dr Taylor does not wish to move the whole series (nos 25-29) to 1741, I conclude that no. 25 had best left where it is, in 1739, where it reads quite plausibly and lives on good terms with its neighbours.

Finally, a word about dr Taylor's other comment: 'Such errors would weaken any legal claim JJ might make'. In the first place, JJ could not contemplate making a *legal* claim at all. In law, he had not a leg to stand on, and he knew it. He was the victim of a legal swindle. The unspeakable Pellissari who refused to part with Suzanne Rousseau's money or even pay the agreed rate of interest was legally in a quite unassailable position. JJ's case was a matter of equity, not of law. His brother had been missing for a long time, nothing had been heard from him for ages, he could be presumed dead, and JJ and his father needed the money. It is obvious that the various inaccuracies in the document setting out these facts would have made no difference to the justice of the claim at all, even if they had come to light. Sixteen years' silence would have been just as powerful an argument as nineteen, seven years of legal majority just as good as nine. Even if the discrepancies had been noted, they would have been dismissed as rhetorical exaggeration. JJ's aim was not to initiate a law-suit, but to get pressure applied to the recalcitrant Pelissari by the French Resident through his *aumônier*. The Resident, of course, was a particularly powerful figure in Geneva, especially so soon after the *Médiation*. JJ's *mémoire* was intended to supply the *abbé* Arnauld with the necessary ammunition and leave him to fight the battle as he thought fit. Very likely no inquiry would have been made into the facts at all. It was common ground that François Rousseau had been of age for a long time and that nothing

had been heard of him for a long time. Perhaps JJ even took advantage of the fact that no inquiry would be made to introduce into his letter one or two surreptitious 'improvements'. However that may be, XVIIIth century petitions and similar documents are full of such inaccuracies, and JJ's was no exception.[7]

IV

L32: This is a love letter (distinctly peculiar in tone), known only through a second draft, corrected. It is addressed from an inn at Lyons to a young woman then living in that city. She is generally and convincingly identified with Suzanne Serre, about whom there is a certain amount of information in the *Confessions*. Dufour placed this letter in 1735[8], P. P. Plan in 1739, I adopted this latter date for different reasons, and dr Taylor would like to move it forward to 1741. In this instance, his view has much to recommend it, and I regard the date of this letter as still being rather open.

[7] see note 6. One might also wonder, if an inquiry had been made, whether it would necessarily have disclosed all or any of these inaccuracies. We must not transpose on to an eighteenth century administration the habits and bureaucratic resources of the twentieth. Nowadays the Archives d'état in Geneva are kept in such meticulous order and with such loving care that they are not only a pleasure to work in but enable us to find out much more about eighteenth century Geneva than anyone could possibly have known at the time. For instance, no one could have found out from the city administration in 1739 whether François Rousseau had been absent for seventeen or twenty years. The various documents concerning him which are there now were, of course, acquired subsequently. It is true that the exact date of François Rousseau's legal coming of age could have been calculated from the baptismal entry in the *Registres*, but would anyone have bothered to do so? And if a search had been made, would the result have been reliable? There was no trained staff in those days to cope with inquiries. When, in 1762, JJ himself applied for a birth certificate, the authorities informed him that his father's name was David! (David was his grandfather.)

[8] the physical characteristics of the document (in particular the maturity of the handwriting) seem to me sufficient to rule out 1735. There are also other reasons which there is no need to elaborate here, since, I believe, no one now wishes to support 1735.

Dr Taylor's reasons for preferring 1741 are as follows: '[The letter] was written on a second, not a first visit [to Lyons], and [. . .] the first had been of some duration'. This means that the letter fits quite plausibly into the sequence of events of 1741. JJ returned to Lyons in July and remained there until December. He had already spent a year with the Mablys (April 1740-April 1741), during which, as dr Taylor points out, his affection for Suzanne Serre could have ripened.

However, other dates are possible. The two visits to Lyons could, in fact, be placed in some period earlier than 1740-1741.[9] I found it necessary to consider this possibility because the period 1740-1741 raises a difficulty not considered by dr Taylor.

First of all, when was JJ in Lyons before 1740-1741? In his *Confessions* he tells us that he first met mlle Serre in Lyons on his way back from Paris, that is to say, probably in September 1731 (*Pléiade*, i.171).[10] What he adds is of some relevance for the date of L32: '[. . .] Mademoiselle Serre, à laquelle je ne fis pas alors une grande attention, mais dont je me passionnai huit ou neuf ans après'. This fits in fairly well with the date I suggested for L32, though of course the *Confessions* is not an almanac, and statements of this type are often unreliable.

What opportunities had JJ for seeing Suzanne Serre between 1731 and 1740? The answer is, a good many. Between these dates, JJ was in Lyons on several occasions. The *Confessions* give only a fragmentary and schematic account of his travels during this period, and the evidence is sometimes indirect. Disregarding a trip to Lyons of which JJ himself says that 'je ne puis marquer la place'[11], there are others which clearly fall between 1734 and 1738, or even later. Speaking of his distress at seeing mme de Warens

[9] in view of the final paragraph, *both* visits (and not simply the first) would have to be 'of some duration'. This seems to exclude 1742, when JJ was in Lyons only for a few days en route for Paris. April 1740 also seems excluded, for JJ would have then gone straight to the Mablys, without putting up first of all at an inn.

[10] she was then only eleven and a half years old, and not fourteen, as JJ states.

[11] *Pléiade*, i.165; perhaps it can be assigned to 1733-1734.

exploited by every plausible rogue who knocked at her door, JJ says: 'Je m'éloignai de la maison dont je ne pouvois garder la porte; je faisois de petits voyages à Nion, à Genève, à Lyons [. . .]. Les prétextes ne me manquoient pas pour tous ces voyages [. . .]. Elle [Maman] ne demandoit qu'à m'envoyer, je ne demandois qu'à aller; cela ne pouvoit manquer de faire une vie assez ambulante. Ces voyages me mirent à portée de faire quelques bonnes connoissances qui m'ont été dans la suite agréables ou utiles: entre autres à Lyon celle de M. Perrichon [. . .], celle du bon Parisot [. . .]' (*Pléiade*, i.215: there was also, of course, Gauffecourt, who oscillated between Paris, Lyons, Geneva and even Chambéry). In the inextricable chronological confusion of this part of the *Confessions*, a few datable events indicate that JJ is giving us here a synthetic view of his life between 1735 and 1738, or even later. And, of course, the period 1738-1740 is notoriously foreshortened in the *Confessions*. We are told hardly anything about it at all. There is thus no obstacle to placing the letter in 1739, should this be necessary.

Equally, however, there is little positive evidence to support that date, whereas there *is* some, at least, in favour of 1741. Speaking of his return to Lyons after leaving the Mablys and spending some little time at *Les Charmettes*, JJ writes: 'A ce voyage ayant plus de loisir je la vis davantage; mon cœur se prit et très vivement'. True, it is not absolutely clear what he means by 'à ce voyage', for this part of the *Confessions* telescopes two such 'voyages' into one (July-December 1741, and July 1742: see L48, Remarque). The form of words used, however, obviously favours 1741 as the date for his letter. Nonetheless, it must be again emphasised that statements of this type in the *Confessions* are not infrequently wrong. In retrospect, events and feelings become blurred in JJ's mind. Time and again, he fuses, streamlines and transposes: and this is particularly true of the period 1737-1742.

The penultimate paragraph of the letter supplies another clue. Before falling in love with Suzanne Serre, JJ says, he had made up

his mind 'de passer le reste de mes jours en philosophe dans une retraitte qui s'offroit à moi [Les Charmettes]. Vous avez détruit tous ces beaux projets, j'ai senti qu'il m'étoit impossible de vivre éloigné de vous et pour me procurer les moiens de m'en rapprocher je tente un voiage et des projets que mon malheur ordinaire empêchera sans doute de réussir'. What light does this shed on the date of the letter? If we assign the letter to 1741, it conflicts with the *Confessions*, where JJ tells us that he returned to Lyons, after a short spell at Les Charmettes, not lured away from his 'philosophic retreat' by his passion for Suzanne Serre, but mortified by his chilly reception, tormented by the constant reminders of his past happiness, and determined to do something to rescue mme de Warens from the financial disaster towards which she was drifting. Of course, conflict of this kind is not an insuperable obstacle to the dating of a letter. Lovers' vows, we are told, are as false as dicers' oaths: and in any case some error in the psychological motivation described in the *Confessions* is understandable in view of the fusion of the two departures for Lyons referred to above. We must remember also that in the *Confessions* JJ tends to magnify the place of mme de Warens in his mind and heart. However, it is interesting to note that the conflict with the account in the *Confessions* disappears if the letter is placed in 1739, as does also the element of disingenuousness in the phrase about having decided to spend the rest of his life 'en philosophe dans une retraitte qui s'offroit à moi'. That was reasonably close to the truth in 1739; but it was something more than a piece of equivocation in 1741. As for the 'projets', they are just as much a matter for speculation in 1741 as in 1739.[12]

[12] perhaps JJ had in mind the production of an opera? In 1739 it could have been *Iphis*, in 1741 *La Découverte du nouveau monde*. Or alternatively, in 1741 he might have intended to canvass in Lyons his plan for the reform of musical notation, before deciding in 1742 to try his luck with it in Paris. In that case, however, the conflict with the *Confessions* would become more acute: for JJ there quite definitely twice presents his attempt to exploit his proposed notation as a scheme to help mme de Warens, whereas in the letter, the 'projets' are designed to enable him to court Suzanne Serre.

To sum up, the evidence is at least as much in favour of 1741 as of 1739: and when we throw into the scales the fact that we know that JJ was in Lyons in 1741, whereas the 1739 visit, though plausible enough, is hypothetical, then the balance seems to weigh down appreciably in favour of the later date. What then is the difficulty about accepting it?

The difficulty is JJ's endorsement on p.4 of the ms., a point not discussed by dr Taylor. At some later date, on p.4 of the ms., which had remained blank up to this point, Rousseau wrote, in a different ink and a rather different hand, the laconic comment: 'Jeunesse égarée'. This remark must have been written at the latest by July 1742, when JJ deposited his papers with mme de Warens, before leaving Les Charmettes for Paris.[13]

The question then is this: could JJ have written this remark in July 1742 (at the latest) on the draft of a passionate love letter composed as recently as July 1741? Although, as I wrote in my notes on L32, 'la maturité et le dégrisement peuvent créer des distances aussi sûrement que les années', July 1741 does, all the same, seem uncomfortably close! It was this difficulty which led me to prefer 1739.[14]

[13] no satisfactory alternative for the date of this note can be suggested. JJ *may* have been in Chambéry in July 1743, on his way to Venice, but if he was he did not then see mme de Warens. He was next in Chambéry in June 1754, but seems to have forgotten all about the papers he had left with Maman twelve years previously. In any case, one can hardly suppose that he asked to see them, annotated this one document out of so many, and then returned the packet to mme de Warens. This solitary note was evidently written on the document before the parcel was handed over.

[14] incidentally, I do not agree with dr Taylor's view that it is 'disconcerting' that JJ should 'have allowed this letter to fall into mme de Warens's hands'. Mme de Warens was JJ's mistress only for a comparatively short time. She had lovers both before and after him: and however he may have thought of her, and however the legend of Les Charmettes was to grow in his imagination, he meant comparatively little to her. From her point of view, he was a rather unsatisfactory lover, not very ardent and often absent; and in 1737, as we know, he was replaced by Wintzenried. By 1739 JJ had been cold-shouldered for two years, and was shortly to be squeezed out altogether. Mme de Warens would

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L16, note *i*. This letter, written from Grenoble to mme de Warens, and dated '13 septembre 1737', contains the following sentence: 'Il faut parler de Monsieur de l'Orme. J'ai eu l'honneur, Madame, de lui remettre votre lettre en main propre. Ce Monsieur s'excusant sur l'absence de M. L'Evêque, m'offrit un écu de six frans.' My note identifies 'M. L'Evêque' as Jean de Caulet, consecrated bishop of Grenoble in 1726. Dr Taylor comments: 'Partly in view of the fact that RAL alters the DP reading of "Mr L'Evêque" to "M. L'Evêque", note *i* may refer not to the bishop but to some merchant or banker. The tone would suggest this'.

This interpretation was in fact put forward, more tentatively, by DP: 'S'agit-il de l'evêque de Grenoble ou d'un Monsieur Lévêque?' (DP i.57, note 1). But I confess I do not altogether follow dr Taylor's reasoning. In the XVIIIth century 'Mr' is just as common as an abbreviation for 'Monsieur' as 'M'. The fact that I have reprinted the source correctly makes no difference at all, in this instance, to the meaning. Nor can I agree about the tone. Fortunately, however, the interpretation of the passage does not depend on such imponderables. It is perfectly true, as Dufour was no doubt aware, that 'Levêque' or 'Levesque' was a surname quite frequently met with in Dauphiné: and there was indeed about this time a *maître d'école* of that name living in the town, not to mention a few workmen. No one called L'Evêque, however, was rich enough to be included in the 1739 nominal rôle drawn up for the *capitation*. So much for the merchant or banker.

However that may be, there can be no doubt whatsoever that it was the Bishop that JJ called on in 1737, for the 'De L'Orme'

certainly have had nothing to complain about if the vacant place in his heart had been filled by a woman of his own generation: and on JJ's side, it seems that the maternal element in her image, never wholly eclipsed, was predominating once more. In any case, would not the papers handed over to her have been sealed?

in question was none other than the Bishop's secretary and chaplain.[15] There are a number of episcopal documents signed by him in this capacity in the Grenoble archives. He was a priest from Pontoise who was certainly in Grenoble by 1727, and he was still there in 1737.

[15] I am obliged for this information to m. R. Avezou, the very helpful archivist of the Department of the Isère.

Marivaux's reputation among his contemporaries

by Harry Redman, jr.

'Personne', wrote Diderot, 'n'a autant d'humeur, pas même une jolie femme qui se lève avec un bouton sur le nez, qu'un auteur menacé de survivre à sa réputation', and the *philosophe* cited Marivaux as a case in point. This was in *Le Neveu de Rameau*, which Diderot seems not to have intended to publish. Diderot disliked Marivaux and was not an impartial critic, but he was not the only observer who suspected that Marivaux was concerned lest he live to behold his own reputation's demise. One who shared Diderot's view was Marmontel. Kinder than Diderot, he pitied the old man's attempts to prove, in conversation, that the wisdom, the wit, and the subtle outlook to which he owed his position were still at his command, even if one had to 'mettre à l'alambic' all that he said in order to understand it. Marivaux seemed strained and unnatural to Marmontel, who nevertheless conceded that at times the old brilliance did blaze up in all its lustre. Now and then Marivaux's remarks contained 'heureux aperçus' and 'brillants traits de lumière', but this was rare. He spoke for many contemporaries when he summed up his ideas. 'Il n'y eut jamais, je crois, d'amour-propre plus délicat, plus chatouilleux et plus craintif', he wrote, adding with a charitable touch, 'Mais comme il ménageait soigneusement celui des autres, on respectait le sien;

et seulement on le plaignait de ne pouvoir pas se résoudre à être simple et naturel.'[1]

Not all critics tried as hard as this one did to understand. Yet numerous are the contemporaries who discussed Marivaux in critical works, diaries, memoirs, letters. Sometimes this was done with genuine kindness, sometimes without. In either case there can be no doubt that, even after death, he never lost the power to hold the public's attention, however uncertain that public was as to the exact niche it intended to put him in. As Marivaux's age drew to a close, his novels continued to be read and certain of his plays continued to draw spectators as much as they had done in the past. With revolution in the air, some did much more than hold the boards and their audiences, and became more popular than they had been in the past. And when the Revolution came, it did Marivaux no harm.

The idea has nevertheless persisted in some quarters that Marivaux did outlive his fame. By way of corroboration, it is pointed out that his death went unnoticed. In the first place, this simply is not true. It *is* true, though, that had not people's minds been preoccupied with several other events, perhaps a more impressive stir would have been made. Marivaux died at an inopportune time, on 12 February 1763. The public was still in a delirium over the treaty of Paris, which earlier that same week had halted the Seven years' war and the nation's disasters. Without labouring the point, it should also be borne in mind that, at the same time, the French were distracted by two other important, controversial matters, a terrible smallpox epidemic and the Jean Calas case. An emotional tide that, for the moment, drowned out most other considerations had been unleashed. Nonetheless, obituaries there

[1] *Mémoires* (Paris 1891), pp.143-144, 227-228. While he did not dwell upon the matter, Marivaux's contorted, mannered speech did not escape his attention, and he treated the subject in his *Eléments de littérature* (Paris 1892, ii.326), a series of articles culled from his contributions to the *Encyclopédie*. Here he asserted that Marivaux's peasants' naturalness is spoiled by 'un raffinement d'expression, une recherche curieuse de tours singuliers, ou de figures étudiées'.

were and they show that Marivaux's death was a matter in which the cultivated world took an interest, just as they show that the late author's works were still very much in the sentimental public domain. On the appropriate date, Bachaumont's *Mémoires secrets* remarked, 'M. de Marivaux, de l'Académie Française, est mort aujourd'hui. Les deux théâtres se sont enrichis de ses productions, et plusieurs de ses romans ingénieux sont entre les mains de tout le monde.' Though said in passing, the 'tout le monde' is not without interest. The same notice mentions the deceased writer's delicate, intricate manner, then concludes with a misstatement as to how old he was and declares that he had become inactive—which was not the case. The *Mémoires secrets* make it clear that, far from having been forgotten, Marivaux was a person whose death was an event of some moment in the world of letters.

Just at the time when Marivaux died, Grimm returned to France and resumed personal direction of the *Correspondance littéraire*. Like Diderot, Grimm hated the dead man but had to admit in the article he devoted to him that *La Vie de Marianne* and *Le Paysan parvenu* were 'très connus'. The circumstance obviously displeased him. Grudgingly he held that were it true, as rumour had it, that these novels had inspired those of Fielding and Richardson, then it would have to be admitted that this once 'un mauvais original a fait faire des copies admirables'. Marivaux's theatre is mentioned, but no more. Grimm declares that the new philosophic spirit had much earlier annihilated honourable positions in literature when based on as little as Marivaux's. Marivaux is compared to a once attractive woman who sooner or later has had to endure the harsh realities that are her lot when her charms have vanished. The critic was elaborate and detailed when he underlined his victim's extreme sensitivity, which made him suspicious, unhappy, and unbearable. As for Marivaux's peculiar style, it is dismissed as one that a reader detects immediately. It shows care, intellect, and once in a while verisimilitude, but it is bad.

Grimm's associate Alembert treated Marivaux in his *Eloges historiques*, a series devoted to members of the Académie française and their works. While Alembert remains suave and courteous, while he concedes that Marivaux had tried to explain or answer various criticisms that had been made of his works, he was too much the *philosophe* not to consider Marivaux overrated. His criticism is not without an element of spite, perhaps, since Marivaux had once made some uncharitable remarks about his pastime, mathematics, and had shown an antipathetic attitude toward Alembert in *L'Ile de la raison ou les petits hommes*.

In the series, Marivaux is studied just after Crébillon *père*, whom many contemporaries rated, with Voltaire, as the French theatre's most brilliant ornament. Alembert appears to have held somewhat the same opinion and makes Marivaux look drab in comparison. Charging that the whole of Marivaux's theatre is a set of variations on the eternal *surprise de l'amour* theme, he also blasted the dramatist's twisted, contorted speech. 'Ce singulier jargon, tout à la fois précieux et familier, recherché et monotone, est sans exception, celui de tous ses personnages, de quelque état qu'ils puissent être, depuis les marquis jusqu'aux paysans, et depuis les maîtres jusqu'aux valets. . . . On croit entendre dans ses pièces des étrangers de beaucoup d'esprit, qui, obligés de converser dans une langue qu'ils ne savent qu'imparfaitement, se sont fait de cette langue et de la leur un idiome particulier, semblable à un métal imparfait, mais faussement éclatant, qui aurait été formé par hasard de la réunion de plusieurs autres', he said. That Marivaux had a host of admirers abroad Alembert later dismisses with the quip that the author's bad French led these foreign readers and spectators to believe that their own was better than it really was (*Œuvres* [Paris 1821], iii.577-621).

A radical partisan of the *philosophes* was Marie Joseph Chénier. Ablaze with the Revolution's virtuous notions, he scrutinized Marivaux with care, discovering a keen but too subtle mind. Less intricate and contrived than the comedies, the novels even so expose their author as a second-class novelist. *Le Paysan parvenu*,

he affirmed in a righteous, sansculotte mood, pictures social corruption at its peak.[2] It seems not to have occurred to this virtue-minded critic that Marivaux disapproved as much as he did of the circumstances treated in the novel.

Another critic, important in his time in spite of a multitude of enemies, was the *abbé* Desfontaines, who edited several periodicals and contributed to others. In one of them, the *Nouvelles du Parnasse*, he reviewed Marivaux. Taken as a whole, what he has to say is not an encomium. He held that in Marivaux there was too much cleverness, that sentiment was dallied with too much, and that true nature too seldom served as the author's model. With the exception of Ergaste, he believed that the characters in *La Mère confidente* 'ont tous de l'esprit jusqu'au superflu'. *Le Legs*, he asserted, had merit and abounded in wit and repartee but was nonetheless 'ventus textilis'. He also voiced the remark about Marivaux and the spiderweb generally attributed to Voltaire and which we shall encounter in a moment. 'Les deux principaux personnages sont le marquis et la comtesse, amoureux l'un de l'autre', the *abbé* proceeds in an irreverent tone. 'Le marquis est un homme très singulier dans sa conduite, plus sot que simple, plus nigaud que timide; et on lui donne en même temps beaucoup de finesse d'esprit, avec des reparties fort délicates. Pour la comtesse, c'est une sublime précieuse, de la plus haute et de la plus délicate impertinence. La deuxième scène, où ces deux rares personnes ont ensemble un entretien tendrement épigrammatique, est en vérité aussi spirituelle que fade et ennuyeuse. Au reste, tout le canevas de la pièce est, pour ainsi dire, tracé sur une belle toile d'araignée.'[3]

[2] *Tableau historique de la littérature française*, in *Œuvres* (Paris 1824), iii.209. Consult also 'Discours prononcé à l'Athénée de Paris, le 13 décembre 1806', and 'Leçon sur les romans français 'in *Œuvres* (Paris 1825), iv.78, 143-144.

[3] see Thelma Morris, *L'Abbé Desfontaines et son rôle dans la littérature de son temps* (*Studies on Voltaire*, xix: Genève 1961), 123-124, 160.

About Voltaire's hostile attitude toward Marivaux and his work perhaps too much has been said. The matter invites examination. Once, in 1712, the two men had vied for election to the Académie française, and Marivaux won. Voltaire was angry. When he could pose as patron, he was benevolent, but when an author, dead or alive, took on rival proportions, that author could expect sarcasm, barbed wit, and little kindness. This proved to be the case with Marivaux, toward whom Voltaire never experienced real liking or warmth. As circumstances dictated, Voltaire was humorous, clever, vicious, inconsistent, as his correspondence shows. In one letter he pretended that he never read Marivaux's works. Others—and even the same one—prove that he did. In two letters written to Thieriot at a time when he believed Marivaux on the point of launching a voluminous printed attack upon him, he was hard pressed to hide real alarm behind an urbane air. He wrote that on exalted levels machinations were being concocted to render both author and book innocuous. He hinted that the work would not be allowed to appear and declared that Marivaux could expect terrible reprisals.

One of Voltaire's quips at Marivaux's expense has helped perpetuate the notion that Voltaire loathed Marivaux. This is the clever, if somewhat too pat, remark that Marivaux spent his life weighing matters of no consequence, using spiderwebs as scales. It seems to have been overlooked that Voltaire made the same remark about himself, however (Best.8974). But when not worried about his own status, Voltaire was capable of making more reasonable judgments. Here is one, likewise contained in a letter. 'A l'égard de m^r^ de Marivaux', he wrote to Berger in 1736, 'je serais très fâché de compter parmi mes ennemis un homme de son caractère & dont j'estime l'esprit et la probité. Il y a surtout dans ses ouvrages un caractère de philosophie, d'humanité & d'indépendance dans lequel j'ai trouvé, avec plaisir, mes propres sentiments. Il est vrai que je lui souhaite quelquefois un style moins recherché & des sujets plus nobles. . . . Je lui reprocherai . . . de trop détailler les passions & de manquer quelquefois le

chemin du cœur, en prenant des routes un peu trop détournées. J'aime d'autant plus son esprit que je le prierais de le moins prodiguer! Il ne faut point, qu'un personnage de comédie songe à être spirituel, il faut qu'il soit plaisant malgré lui & sans croire l'être. C'est la différence qui doit être entre la comédie & le simple dialogue' (Best.967). True, in this letter Voltaire was on his best behaviour. It is even possible that the letter was written in order to be shown, in the hope that it would persuade Marivaux not to print the supposed attack which never appeared anyway. Nevertheless, the appreciation is generally an equitable one. Furthermore, Voltaire's statements concerning Marivaux are the same ones that other contemporaries, whether hostile or kindly disposed, were making. Most of them felt that Marivaux was unduly sensitive, for example, and Voltaire agreed. Then too, if the two men were not congenial, part of this was Marivaux's fault. Marivaux expected Voltaire to become his champion, and when he did not choose to do so, Marivaux was hurt and called Voltaire a consummate *bel esprit*, 'la perfection des idées communes'. Even so, La Harpe overstated things when he claimed that Marivaux hated Voltaire.

La Harpe himself is supposed to have been an implacable opponent. His *Lycée* more than once discusses Marivaux, but on the whole the praise has about the same dimensions as the blame and is about as solid. As he discusses the over-all writer, La Harpe points out that Marivaux has had the honour to leave his name to a particular manner, which he proceeds to characterize as 'le mélange le plus bizarre de métaphysique subtile et de locutions triviales, de sentiments alambiqués et de dictons populaires'. He adds, 'Jamais on n'a mis autant d'apprêt à vouloir paraître simple; jamais on n'a retourné des pensées communes de tant de manières plus affectées les unes que les autres'. This was all the more serious because Molière's *Les Précieuses ridicules* was presumed to have banished such nonsense. To La Harpe Marivaux was moreover wearisome, verbose, and sterile. Marivaux's introduction to one of his own works is used to demonstrate that

the author believed he had invented natural theatre diction. La Harpe denied this, contending that such speech is not only unnatural but deserves ridicule.

Furthermore, he insisted that all of Marivaux's characters, whatever their station, not only bore their creator's stamp but also had his mind and outlook. Vanity and coquettishness, he continued, were all that Marivaux had ever been able to see in women, and their other, nobler characteristics had been lost upon him. The critic complained that this indicated Marivaux's limited vision, though it might have indicated La Harpe's also. 'Si Marivaux voyait finement, il ne voyait pas loin', he wrote. More than once La Harpe called attention to a matter that bothered him and several other contemporaries who noted it, that is that Marivaux's plots and method were better suited to the novel than to comedy. As he phrased it in one instance, Marivaux's overdone nuances 'peuvent passer dans un roman; mais au théâtre il faut des couleurs fortes et des traits plus prononcés. On peut perdre du temps dans un roman, et faire valoir les petites choses; mais au théâtre on a trop peu de temps. . . . Ce n'est pas dans une vaste perspective qu'il faut exposer des miniatures qui ne sont bonnes à voir qu'avec une loupe.' It is true that Marivaux's characteristic work resembles that of a miniaturist, but what La Harpe and those who shared his ideas did not perceive, or care to perceive, is that the miniature is an art in its own right. Once, as he hurried on to add that his victim 'avait beaucoup d'esprit', La Harpe made the authoritarian announcement that 'Marivaux avait peu de talent pour le théâtre', adding that he was a lesser dramatist that Dancourt. While La Harpe's tone is not in the least malicious, the observation comes as something of a shock to the modern reader. La Harpe felt too that Marivaux was weak in plot structure both in the novels and in the comedies, but more so in the comedies than in his other work.

As were certain other Marivaux readers and spectators, La Harpe was distressed in addition that the successive comedies each appeared to be mere variants upon the same, all too familiar

theme. Who could not predict how each one would end? In a letter to Frederick the great La Harpe wailed that 'L'héroïne dit toujours au commencement de la pièce, *je ne me marierai point*, et se marie au dénouement'. Elsewhere, when he mentions that Marivaux had had the good luck to succeed in France's two major theatres, the Théâtre français and the Théâtre italien, he mentioned also that it was with his habitual theme in all cases, '*Les Surprises de l'amour*, retournées de toutes les façons'. The comedies thus pall sooner or later. 'On sourit, mais on baille.'

La Harpe did concede that certain comedies, however 'cold', had retained an uncontested appeal. These were *La Surprise de l'amour*, *Le Legs*, *L'Epreuve*, and *Le Préjugé vaincu*. La Harpe praised some others as well. One was *Arlequin poli par l'amour*. Whatever its defects, including a lack of plot, in it its author shows natural candor and charm, unravels unusual scenes, and, more important, takes a routine clown and turns him into a real character. That the clown is in love lends him interest. La Harpe liked *Le Prince travesti* almost as well, and here too it was how the hitherto traditional clown was conceived that created real drama. An *honnête homme*, the clown constitutes a 'contraste avec toute la malice et toutes les séductions' that one encounters at every turn in a corrupt court. Had not his usual limitations held him back, Marivaux could have done much more with such a noble topic.

With respect to Marivaux's nondramatic works, La Harpe fails to mention some, states that one likes to read two or three chapters of the *Spectateur français* but not the rest, and commends *Le Paysan parvenu*. We have seen that La Harpe considered Marivaux's plots better suited to the novel than to dramatic composition. However, even in the novels the plots were lame. But in *La Vie de Marianne* he saw an exception. This book is cohesive, it is universal, the characterization and situations have interest, and the portraits of mme de Miran, mme Dorsin, m. de Climal, mme Dutour, Valville, and the heroic Marianne are remarkable. Into Marianne her

creator had instilled his best and showed her as universal womankind.[4]

A curious admirer of Marivaux was Charles Collé, whose diaries and memoirs, with all their clever and not too reliable scuttlebutt about writers their author knew, nevertheless sum up Marivaux and his art well. It is scant, to be sure, but the criticism is just and emanates from commendable taste. Much of what he said he wrote when he learned that Marivaux had died and is thus a rather spontaneous evaluation. As with Grimm and the *Mémoires secrets*, the death date is inaccurate. Collé lauds Marivaux's virtue, kindness, bonhomie, and disinterestedness, and, like Montesquieu, admires *La Mère confidente*. He is almost alone in mentioning *Le Jeu de l'amour et du hasard*, now considered Marivaux's masterpiece. As was true with other critics, this one mentions Marivaux's sensitive disposition but does not make it look as if it were a vice. He tells us that Marivaux lived upon certain persons' charities and that, at his death, it was discovered that he had been one of mme de Pompadour's pensioners. The critic reproves the deceased somewhat because he was repetitive and also because he overworked his ideas. While he believes that it went to extremes, Collé does not berate Marivaux's ornateness too much, since it was an instrument that the author used to depict delicate ideas and nuanced sentiment. Marivaux's masterpiece, to him, is *L'Epreuve*.

Just as La Harpe did, this critic believed that Marivaux was a better novelist than dramatist. Keeping in mind that this is an era of experimental theatre and that the *drame* was claiming more and more converts and recruits, it is less curious than it would be otherwise when the critic posits the idea, on the whole sound, that Marivaux's comedies are not real comedies. To him it seemed that as a dramatic Marivaux 'a eu un genre de comédie à lui, sans action et sans incidents.' Nevertheless, 'il a trouvé le moyen de

[4] *Lycée* (Paris 1818), xi.373; xii.490, 497-499; xiii.10; xiv.246. *Correspondance littéraire* (Paris 1804), iii.114.

plaire, par la chaleur et le sentiment seul qu'il met dans ses pièces, où l'on aperçoit plus de délicatesse que de force, plus de choses finement senties que de passion'. The critic also pointed out the troublesome time element in the theatre of Marivaux. To be really resolved, the problems treated in this theatre need considerably more time than is available, an observation that Collé could have expanded to bolster his contention that the author's talent was more that of the novelist than the playwright. He believed that Marivaux's dramatic skill resided in some measure in the illusion he created, beyond which it did not occur to his spectators to venture and thus perhaps stumble upon a basic temporal *invraisemblance*. In the critic's words, Marivaux 'avait un art merveilleux pour rapprocher ces temps, en faisant, pour ainsi dire, passer le cœur par tous les différents mouvements, en deux ou trois scènes, qu'il n'aurait dû éprouver qu'en deux ou trois ans.' To summarize his attitude—and what he said would have astounded more than one *philosophe* had these worthies heard or seen it—he made clear his conviction that 'M. de Marivaux est un écrivain estimable, et qui a peint l'homme d'après le nu.' By way of conclusion he then voices an opinion that we have met with before: 'Je crois que son vrai talent, son talent décidé, était celui du roman.'[5]

That part of the frères Parfaict's *Histoire du théâtre français* (Paris 1749; xv.383-384) which deals with Marivaux was published at a time when most of Marivaux's plays had been written. The brothers were enthusiastic. They even liked *Annibal*, affirming that 'Il faudrait extraire presque toutes les scènes de cette tragédie, si l'on voulait en rapporter tous les morceaux saillants.' Commenting upon a Comédie française revival of the play in 1747, they quote an extract from the *Mercure de France*, which concurred wholeheartedly in their judgment. Of Marivaux, the *Mercure* wrote on this occasion, 'Les beautés dont cette tragédie

[5] *Journal et mémoires* (Paris 1868), ii.288-290. Cf. *Journal historique inédit pour les années 1761 et 1762* (Paris 1911), p.214.

est pleine nous feraient regretter qu'il ne se fût pas attaché à ce genre, si les excellentes productions qu'il a données en plusieurs autres pouvaient laisser quelque chose à désirer sur l'emploi de ses talents supérieurs. La pièce a été reçue avec beaucoup d'applaudissements, et elle les mérite.'[6]

The *abbé* Joseph de La Porte has rather little to say about Marivaux in his *Anecdotes dramatiques*, which date from 1775. About *Le Legs*, however, he does say that 'Cette pièce, qui eut peu de succès dans sa nouveauté, est cependant reprise souvent, et vue avec plaisir, mais avec des changements et des retranchements faits par les comédiens' (*Anecdotes dramatiques* [Paris 1775], i.495). Two years later he had occasion to treat Marivaux not only as a dramatist but in other respects as well. Quite aware that the work had been attacked, La Porte informs his readers that 'le style léger, la variété des peintures, le comique ou l'intéressant des situations, les nuances des mœurs, saisies avec esprit', had made the *Spectateur français* famous.[7] He admits that Marivaux the novelist has a style that is at times 'précieux' or at least 'recherché', but often it is 'naturel, enjoué, agréable'. In a few words of genuine tribute he declares that Marivaux 'peint d'un mot', adding that 'Il a l'art de faire passer dans l'esprit de ses lecteurs les sentiments les plus déliés, les fils les plus imperceptibles de la trame du cœur.' In passing La Porte makes it more than clear that Marivaux's novels still have a sizable reading audience fourteen years after their author's death. He declares that Marivaux is 'vraiment original dans sa façon de traiter le roman.... Son *Paysan parvenu* et sa *Vie de Marianne*, si lus et si critiqués, passeront à la postérité. Ce qu'il y a de singulier, c'est que le premier

[6] like many another man of letters before and since, one of the brothers, François, had tried his hand at the theatre before finding where his real direction lay. He collaborated during this time with Marivaux in the writing of several plays, and consequently sceptics may want to make some allowances. It should be noted, however, that the *Mercure de France* article is in accord with the brothers' opinion.

[7] *Nouvelle bibliothèque d'un homme de goût, ou tableau de la littérature ancienne et moderne, étrangère et nationale* (Paris 1777), iv.373.

roman est beaucoup plus plaisant que la plupart des comédies de Marivaux. On n'a jamais mieux peint les ridicules et les vices des faux dévots. Marianne ne fait pas rire, mais elle intéresse jusqu'aux larmes. L'auteur peint l'amour avec des couleurs si fines et si touchantes qu'il est à craindre que la lecture de ses écrits ne réveille ou n'entretienne cette passion dans les jeunes cœurs' (iv.76-77). La Porte predicted that the novels would live on.

At the hands of La Porte, Marivaux's theatre received praise mingled with a touch of mild rebuke. The critic shows that in several respects Marivaux was an innovator and that he even had his disciples, who often lacked their master's taste and excellence. As La Porte expressed it, Marivaux realized that his predecessors had exhausted the comedy of character and as a result he turned to comedies of intrigue. He conceived the idea of analyzing the human heart in 'dissertations tendrement épigrammatiques.' 'Le canevas de ses comédies n'est . . . ordinairement qu'une petite toile fort légère, dont l'ingénieuse broderie, ornée de traits plaisants, de pensées jolies, de situations neuves, de reparties agréables, de fines saillies, exprime ce que les replis du cœur ont de plus secret, ce que les raffinements de l'esprit ont de plus délicat.' La Porte reiterates, perhaps more sincerely, Voltaire's assertion that Marivaux's works show a true 'philosophic' spirit. 'Ce qui y règne principalement', he points out, 'est un fonds de philosophie, dont les idées, développées avec finesse, filées avec art, et adroitement accommodées à la scène, ont toutes pour but le bien général de l'humanité. Quoiqu'on reproche à Marivaux de trop disserter sur le sentiment, ce n'est cependant pas le sentiment qui domine dans la plupart de ses comédies; mais lorsqu'elles manquent d'un certain intérêt de cœur, il y a presque toujours un intérêt d'esprit qui le remplace.' More precision would perhaps lend more warmth to the theatre of Marivaux. Perhaps too less cleverness would bring with it more naturalness. Sometimes the conversations sparkle with too much wit that does not always make sense. Sometimes humankind's mores and quirks do not

really stand out. Finally, one cannot avoid the admission that there are those 'expressions détournées qui n'ont de piquant que la singularité de leur association.' To the extent that these constitute a nuisance, Marivaux is a sort of criminal 'qu'on ne condamne qu'à regret' (ii.119-121).

Through his disciple, *abbé* Trublet, Fontenelle's attitude toward Marivaux and his work are transmitted to the modern reader. Fontenelle, wrote the *abbé*, 'regardait M. de Marivaux non seulement comme un homme de beaucoup d'esprit, mais comme un esprit original, un homme de génie; comme celui de tous nos bons écrivains peut-être dont le caractère et la manière de penser et d'écrire sont le plus à lui et lui appartiennent le plus en propre'.[8] But Trublet knew Marivaux himself and came to independent conclusions. A contributor to the *Mercure de France* and editor of the *Journal des savants*, what he has to say commands a certain respect. In his work devoted to Fontenelle and La Motte, Trublet on his own had said of Marivaux, 'S'il analyse, il peint', and in a manuscript journal, published in part by Paul Chaponnière in the *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* in 1928, he paints Marivaux's weak points and eccentricities, coupled with his virtues. Marivaux's almost proverbial sensitivity did not escape this observer, any more than did his politeness and kindness. His journal corroborates something that we already know, namely that there were those who decried Marivaux, but it also shows us that the writer had his idolators who quoted his works whenever possible. As for Trublet's own opinion, he reproves Marivaux's subtleties and obscurities but lauds his intellect, his brilliant remarks, and his wit. This realistic critic summarizes his comments with the statement that 'Marivaux pense singulièrement et s'exprime plus singulièrement encore', adding that his ideas are unusual to start with but that in his desire to make them as understandable as he could, he had clad them in ill-chosen

[8] *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de mm. de Fontenelle et de La Motte* (2e éd., Amsterdam 1759), pp.209-214.

phrases just as unusual. The result? 'Il a passé le but; il a dit plus qu'il ne pensait.'

Charles Palissot's evil reputation would make most scholars wince at the idea of including him in a serious discussion. At one time or another Palissot had teased or attacked his writer contemporaries, important or not, almost to a man—or to a woman. Marivaux had not escaped, and a certain amount of mild ridicule had been tossed at him in *La Dunciade* and *Les Tuteurs*. Palissot must have repented, however, for his *Mémoires sur la littérature* makes ample restitution in the well-knit, alert article that it devotes to our author. Palissot deplored Marivaux's 'entortillé', 'précieux' mannerism, which detracts from the author's real merits. Unlike Charles Collé, he believed that Marivaux had a decided comic talent, and rare are those individuals, he contended, who have as much wit. With Collé, he agreed that Marivaux's comedies are not true comedies, but he adds that so much care has been lavished upon their construction that no action is needed to keep them alive. In Marivaux's theatre he applauds the skill with which the author has made situations and even the time element seem natural when actually they were implausible and when, as some contended, the plots should have been treated in novels rather than comedies to start with. Palissot hails the superb acumen that permitted Marivaux to peer into and dissect his women characters' innermost nature, both as to essentials and as to details. He was charmed also at the artistry with which Marivaux conveyed what he saw there, but he felt that the author philosophized too much about it. He was alive to sentimental nuances and believed that Marivaux alone held their secret. He concludes his article with the warm observation, 'En un mot, la vérité qui ne meurt jamais. . ., fera vivre, malgré leurs défauts, la plupart de ses romans et de ses comédies, et Marivaux sera toujours cité parmi les peintres de la nature' (*Œuvres complètes*, [Paris 1809], v.64-67).

Six years after Marivaux's death appeared Lesbros de La Versane's *Esprit de Marivaux, ou analectes de ses ouvrages*, consisting

of selections from Marivaux's works and preceded by a 'Vie ou éloge historique de m. de Marivaux.' Filled with 'de la délicatesse, du sentiment et de la morale', *La Vie de Marianne* and *Le Paysan parvenu* also reveal, in this critic's opinion, Marivaux's vivacious, inventive mind. That Marivaux likewise possessed a deep understanding of the human heart there could be no doubt. Among the plays, Lesbros de La Versane preferred *La Double Inconstance*, *La Seconde Surprise de l'amour*, *La Mère confidente*, *Les Serments indiscrets*, *Les Sincères*, and *L'Ile des esclaves*. He nevertheless thought that Marivaux would have succeeded had he chosen to devote himself to heavier drama. Palissot pointed out that there had been complaints that Marivaux's comedies were not real comedies. Lesbros de La Versane makes a judicious remark in this connection. 'Tous les genres de comédies de caractère étant épuisés', he states, 'M. de Marivaux donna toute son application à la composition des pièces d'intrigue. . . . Il a introduit le vrai ton de la conversation sur la scène'. In this kind of dialogue, sentiment bubbles over. Lesbros de La Versane also praised Marivaux's manner of scrutinizing the heart. 'Il en montre les replis les plus cachés; il en dévoile tous les mouvements; il en peint toutes les passions.'

This commentator saw in Marivaux a social critic. Like Voltaire, like La Porte, he detected in his work a philosophic spirit. He stressed in Marivaux's writings 'cette légèreté, ce naturel, et cette philosophie aimable qui font le principal mérite de ses ouvrages.' For him it was a tolerant philosophy, having as its aim to persuade. Most readers will agree that he was overstating his case, though, when he proclaimed Marivaux a modern Theophrastus, a Democritus, and a Seneca—not to mention a Fontenelle—all rolled into one.

Diderot had once complained that the English admired Marivaux too much. The English in question were those cultivated persons who lived much of the time in the French capital and came in contact with Diderot and other *philosophes*. On matters intellectual and cultural these choice visitors were sometimes

more French than the French and achieved a total blend with their Gallic environment. Such a person was Horace Walpole, with whom Diderot debated Richardson, Ossian, and Marivaux at a dinner at baron d'Holbach's. Much earlier, Walpole had had Marivaux's portrait painted and placed in his workroom at Strawberry Hill. Diderot's antipathetic remarks concerning Marivaux dit not alter his views in the least and several weeks later he went to see *Le Legs*, which he enjoyed. Walpole became aware that in Paris there existed an element hostile to Marivaux and was probably correct in chalking it up to the *philosophes'* activities. On this matter, as on a good many others, Walpole was in complete accord with his hostess, admirer, and correspondent, mme Du Deffand, who, as she said in a letter to Walpole, did not hesitate to take a visitor to see *La Surprise de l'amour*, and who also owned, in addition to the dramatic works, the *Spectateur français*. Though persuaded that Marivaux had his limitations and should not be imitated, she nonetheless rated him a superior novelist and one whose works she most enjoyed.

But Horace Walpole was not an isolated case. Garrick, whom Diderot also knew and whom he admired so intensely, was another. On trips to Paris Garrick wanted to attend such plays as *La Fausse suivante* and *L'Epreuve*. On one occasion he saw Marivaux in the audience and was so impressed that he noted the fact in one of his diaries. Still another example is lord Chesterfield, who knew Marivaux in mme de Lambert and mme de Tencin's *salons*. Like most contemporaries, he reproved what he considered to be excessive ornamentation in Marivaux's work, but more than once he asked his son to meet and read Marivaux in order to discover what modern human nature was like. Marivaux, he wrote the boy, 'a beaucoup étudié et connaît bien le cœur', with all of its 'plis et replis'.

What, then, can be said about Marivaux and his contemporaries' views, evaluations, and reactions? There were hostile voices, to be sure, especially in the *philosophes'* ranks. Grimm is the notable example. But no writer, in Marivaux's time or ours,

has ever failed to arouse some measure of hostility if he has attracted attention at all. For Alembert, inimical also, to find a pretext to temper praise with rancor, or rancor with praise, was not at all problematical; when convenient, he could remember that Marivaux had ridiculed mathematicians' comic pretentiousness. There were also the wits such as Sébastien Mercier, who observed that Marivaux was dead and a street named in his honour, and thus dismissed the matter (*Tableau de Paris* [Amsterdam 1788], xi.242-243). Be it said parenthetically, however, that that street alone would have wrecked Diderot's prediction that his name would not survive the author. But many other pointed criticisms and random statements reveal distinct attitudes towards Marivaux and in so doing reveal that the author was by no means forgotten either by his immediate contemporaries or by the succeeding generation. For one, there was Voltaire, who vacillated. Other contemporaries, La Harpe at their head, seem to have had to do battle with their artistic criteria and then to have capitulated, whether their principles authorized it or not, before Marivaux's insidious charm. Like Collé and Palissot, a great many frankly admired him and said as much, now and then with a reservation or two.

Still others were real enthusiasts: Fontenelle, who was drawn to *Les Effets surprenants de la sympathie*,[9] destined to be one of the more obscure novels; Montesquieu, whom even the discourses delivered at the Académie française charmed, and who held that in *La Mère confidente* 'les mœurs sont admirables';[10] Rousseau, the timid Rousseau, whose *Confessions* tell us that he submitted his *Narcisse* to Marivaux to be touched up; Florian, who called him 'ce grand anatomiste du cœur humain';[11] Julie de Lespinasse,

[9] it was also Fontenelle who issued the permission to print, which is dated 10 July 1712. See Frédéric Deloffre, 'Premières idées de Marivaux sur l'art du roman', *L'Esprit créateur* (1961), i.179.

[10] *Pensées et fragments inédits*, éd. Gaston de Montesquieu (Bordeaux 1901), ii.61. Consult the same author's *Correspondance* (Paris 1914), ii.228.

[11] in the introduction to his own plays; *Œuvres complètes* (Paris 1803), iii.9.

that plaintive amoureuse, who, despite her attachment to Alembert, knew more than one heartbreak and perhaps pondered over the similarities between Marianne's uncertain status in the world and her own;[12] and numerous others.

Even Marivaux's conversation was recalled by those who participated in it. Writing his *Maximes et anecdotes*, Chamfort, so conscious of rhetorical delicacies, remembered Marivaux's comment that style has gender 'et qu'on reconnaissait les femmes à une phrase' (*Maximes et anecdotes*, éd. Jean Mistler [Monaco 1944], p.172). That continuations such as mme Riccoboni's materialized to extend *La Vie de Marianne* are so much evidence that Marivaux continued to have an interested public. It was seven years after Marivaux's death that the *Gazette de France* reported that at the court of Vienna, celebrating Marie Antoinette's engagement to the future Louis XVI, a performance of *La Mère confidente* had been given (an interesting choice when one remembers how assiduously Maria Theresa, at a distance, was later to attempt to be her daughter's mentor). It is clear that Marivaux made an impact upon his contemporaries that did not abate with his death. The sole possible conclusion is that Diderot's remark was wishful thinking, an attempt to influence those whom he permitted to read *Le Neveu de Rameau* in manuscript, or, quite simply, a case of bad guesswork.

[12] in a letter to comte de Guibert, dated 1 July 1773, she quotes Marivaux in order to express her emotions. 'Je souffre et je ne jouis de rien, voilà tout, comme dit Marivaux'; *Lettres de Mlle de Lespinasse* (Paris 1906), p.26.

L'Idéalisme et le réalisme dans Les Egarements du cœur et de l'esprit *de Crébillon fils*

par Marguerite Marie D. Stevens

I

Si nous lisons attentivement la préface des *Egarements* rédigée par Crébillon fils, nous remarquons ses nombreuses allusions aux problèmes littéraires auxquels se heurtaient les écrivains du XVIIIe siècle. Problèmes qu'ils s'ingéniaient à résoudre plus ou moins savamment pour percer le mur d'indignation soulevé par les partisans de la littérature conservatrice, c'est-à-dire des formes littéraires consacrées par les écrivains de l'antiquité. Crébillon nous annonce dans ces mémoires que: 'L'homme qui écrit ne peut avoir que deux objets, l'utile et l'amusant.' Il se propose donc d'instruire et de plaire, but si difficilement atteint par la plupart des auteurs. Et ceci, en substituant à l'aspect idéaliste et invraisemblable des romans du XVIIe siècle, l'aspect plus réaliste de 'la Comédie, le tableau de la vie humaine'. Présenter aux hommes la peinture de leurs vices, de leurs travers et de leurs ridicules, les aider à se mieux connaître, se mieux comprendre, et par cela même les aider peut-être à se réformer, tout en les amusant. Tel est brièvement le but que se propose Crébillon et quelques-uns de ses contemporains.

Il s'agit donc de donner au roman un air de véracité utile et amusante, car l'atmosphère littéraire du temps était fortement hostile au roman. Crébillon savait que 'le Roman si méprisé des

personnes sensées' devait satisfaire à certaines exigences. Il était au courant de toutes les attaques esthétiques et morales dirigées contre le roman à la fin du XVIIe et au début du XVIIIe siècle. Attaques dirigées contre l'immoralité du roman dans lequel l'amour tenait un rôle privilégié. Innocent ou coupable, l'amour ou plutôt la peinture de l'amour était un scandale, même chez les plus éclairés. Attaques dirigées également contre 'l'invraisemblance et l'irréalisme de la composition des romans, de leur invention, de leurs situations, de leur psychologie, de leur style'.[1] La présentation de quelques-unes de ces attaques est nécessaire pour nous pénétrer de l'antagonisme profond des détracteurs du roman.

En 1660, l'abbé de Villiers affirme dans ses *Réflexions sur les défauts d'autrui* que: 'Rien ne gâte plus l'esprit que de lire des mauvais ouvrages; tous les petits romans et toutes les petites historiettes ne sont pas seulement contraires à la pureté des sentiments et des mœurs; ces sortes de livres gâtent encore plus l'esprit que le cœur' (May, p.9).

En 1665, le Janséniste célèbre Nicole lance dans sa *Lettre sur l'hérésie imaginaire*: 'Un faiseur de romans et poète de théâtre est un empoisonneur public, non des corps, mais des âmes des fidèles, qui doit se regarder comme coupable d'une infinité d'homicides spirituels, ou qu'il a causés en effet ou qu'il a pu causer par ses écrits pernicieux' (p.24).

La marquise de Lambert, femme pourtant éclairée, écrit en 1726, dans ses *Avis d'une mère à sa fille*: 'La lecture des romans est plus dangereuse; je ne voudrais pas que l'on en fît un grand usage; ils mettent du faux dans l'esprit. Le roman n'étant jamais pris sur le vrai, allume l'imagination, affaiblit la pudeur, met le désordre dans le cœur; et pour peu qu'une jeune personne ait de la disposition à la tendresse, hâte et précipite son penchant' (p.25).

[1] Georges May, *Le dilemme du roman français au XVIIIe* (Paris &c. 1963), p.20.

Boileau lui-même, en 1710, dans sa préface au *Héros de roman*, attaque la puérilité des romans de Gomberville, de La Calprenède, de Desmarets et de Scudéry. Il leur reproche 'leur peu de solidité, leur affèterie précieuse de langage, leurs conversations vagues et frivoles, les portraits avantageux faits à chaque bout de champ de personnes de très médiocre beauté et quelquefois même laides par excès, et tout ce long verbiage d'amour qui n'a point de fin' (p.21).

Tous les excès auxquels s'étaient livrés les romanciers idéalistes avaient contribué à la disgrâce du roman, aux yeux des lecteurs et de la critique littéraire. Les réactions contre ces excès de forme et de fond se manifestèrent dès la fin du XVIIe siècle et acquirent toute leur ampleur au début du XVIIIe siècle.

II

Il nous faut donc analyser le roman de Crébillon, en quelque sorte le décomposer pour rechercher les éléments d'idéalisme et de réalisme qui l'identifient, soit avec les formes désuètes de l'ancien roman, soit avec les formes originales du roman nouveau. La composition de ce petit chef-d'œuvre de deux cents pages est un joyau d'unité et de sobriété dans le genre, dans l'intrigue et dans la structure.

Le sous-titre des *Egarements*, *Les Mémoires de mr. de Meilcour*, indique très clairement le penchant de l'auteur pour les nouvelles formes romanesques. Les mémoires, en tant que genre littéraire, ont fait leur apparition à la suite des quelques romans historiques de la fin du XVIIe et au début du XVIIIe, tels que ceux de mme de Lafayette, de mme de Villedieu et de Courtily de Sandras. Ces romans historiques, si proches de leur époque par leurs sujets, s'étaient engagés vers le réalisme, sans s'être cependant allégés des artifices si condamnables qui les encombraient. Souvent alourdis par des intrigues sentimentales et politiques, ils n'étaient le plus souvent que des romans à clefs dans lesquels se jouait le sort de l'état. Les 'histoires secrètes' et autres leur succèdent et apparaissent

vers 1690; de là, il n'y avait qu'un pas à faire vers la rédaction des mémoires. *Les Mémoires du comte de Gramont* de Hamilton datent de 1713; d'autres mémoires paraissent coup sur coup: les *Mémoires* de Retz, 1717; les *Mémoires d'Henriette d'Angleterre* de mme de Lafayette, 1720; etc., mais la plupart des intrigues se déroulaient encore au pied d'un trône, dans une atmosphère bien trop éloignée du lecteur. Toutes prétendent au réalisme par le cadre et la véracité de leurs récits. *Les Mémoires de mr. de Meilcour*, parus en 1736, se distinguent des précédents par leur fraîcheur et leur grande simplicité. Un homme de condition et quelques autres personnages de la bonne société revivent pour nous une seule aventure, sans doute très fine et très complexe, mais une seule; et cette aventure profonde et douloureuse n'est autre que l'éducation sentimentale d'un tout jeune homme, m. de Meilcour. Sans doute est-ce la première fois, que l'histoire de la vie privée d'un jeune homme apparaît, dépouillée de son apparat d'intrigues politiques et amoureuses, et se trouve réduite à sa seule expression.

L'intrigue de ce roman se borne à peu de faits. M. de Meilcour, âgé de dix-sept ans, fait son entrée dans le monde. Elevé sous la protection d'une mère veuve, mais très vertueuse, il ne connaît que la société et les hommes des romans du XVIIe siècle. Abreuvé de ces lectures fades et inutiles, il se lance à la recherche du plaisir ou plutôt à la recherche de la connaissance de l'amour. Il jette son dévolu sur l'une des amies de sa mère, mme de Lursay, d'une tendresse toute maternelle, heureuse de conduire à bien l'éducation de ce jeune homme dont la fraîcheur et la naïveté n'ont pas laissé de la séduire. Mais à peine le but est-il atteint que m. de Meilcour s'éprend de la beauté et de la jeunesse d'Hortense de Théville. En proie aux sentiments les plus divers et les plus contradictoires, il s'achemine à contre-cœur vers sa première aventure amoureuse. Aventure douloureuse dans laquelle il retrace les tourments, les angoisses, 'les égarements du cœur et de l'esprit' d'un adolescent de la bonne société, avec l'amertume d'un innocent dont l'éducation sentimentale s'est doublée d'une pénible éducation morale.

Il n'y a rien d'autre dans ce roman que le cœur et l'esprit de Meilcour, ainsi que le cœur et l'esprit de ses éducateurs dans tous leurs égarements. Roman d'analyse et roman de mœurs présentés par l'adolescent et l'homme mûr se penchant, tour à tour, sur le même passé, pour nous en livrer les secrets.

La structure du roman se divise en trois parties qui représentent toutes trois un stage dans le développement de l'éducation de Meilcour. Aucune digression de lieu ou de temps. La scène est à Paris et l'action se développe en quelques mois. Si l'action est uniquement psychologique, elle ne découle pas des seuls sentiments des personnages, elle a été quelque peu forcée par l'auteur et provoque les rapides volte-face du tendre cœur de Meilcour. C'est dans cette action aux coïncidences fortuites, invraisemblables, que nous retrouvons les formes surannées des romans idéalistes.

Dans la première partie, au moment où, à l'opéra, Meilcour s'imagine être en proie à la passion la plus violente et se livre au bonheur de rendre sensible l'insensible mme de Lursay, 'tout entier à' elle et 'au chagrin d'être privé de sa présence', la vue d'une jeune et belle inconnue l'agite d'un 'mouvement singulier et subit' dont il demeure 'anéanti'. Quelques moments plus tard la jalousie l'étreint et il ressent déjà 'une peine mortelle'. Alors que nous suivons son pauvre cœur ballotté, flottant tour à tour sans espoir, vers une beauté toute jeune et une autre plus mûre, il se hasarde à faire une promenade aux Tuileries. A la recherche des allées les plus solitaires, soupirant 'd'amour et de fureur', il entend deux voix de femmes, et quelles femmes! Une jeune fille et une dame qui ne sont autres que les inconnues de l'opéra. De longues confidences sur l'état d'âme de cette jeune fille révèlent à Meilcour, caché derrière un bosquet, qu'elle est amoureuse. Il ne fallait rien de plus pour plonger notre héros, 'plus amoureux que jamais', dans une 'inquiétude mortelle'. Et voilà refroidi son élan vers mme de Lursay.

La deuxième partie foisonne en menus incidents assez comiques et irréels. Nous assistons à un véritable défilé de la plupart des

personnages dans le salon de mme de Lursay. Meilcour découvre l'identité de la belle inconnue dans la personne d'une de ses cousines, ignorée depuis toujours. Versac, petit-maître admiré de Meilcour et plus tard son mentor, déjà dans le salon au moment de l'arrivée de Meilcour, sorti avant l'entrée de mme de Théville, réapparaît avec le marquis de Pranzi formé autrefois par mme de Lursay. Alors que, durant le souper, Versac fredonne des couplets méchants à peine connus de lui, c'est Meilcour, le naïf, qui possède ces couplets et les offre séance tenante à l'impudique et odieuse mme de Senanges, la contre-partie féminine du comte de Versac, et peut-être aussi sa conquête la plus importante. Mme de Lursay et Meilcour, partis ensemble rendre visite à mme de Théville, montent tous deux dans le même carosse, lui placé 'auprès d'elle', mais sortis de chez leur hôtesse au même moment, Meilcour ordonne malgré mme de Lursay que leurs deux carosses se suivent. Durant cette visite, Meilcour, sur le point de découvrir sa passion à mlle de Théville, se trouve interrompu par son ami Germeuil et mme de Lursay. Et cette dame, si habile à pénétrer le cœur des hommes, ne soupçonne jamais la passion de Meilcour pour Hortense de Théville, mais l'imagine éperdu d'amour pour la personne qu'il méprise le plus, l'antique mme de Senanges.

La troisième partie n'est pas plus exempte d'invraisemblance. Nous remarquons que Meilcour rend visite à mme de Senanges pour lui offrir les vers promis et se voit, malgré lui, entraîné à l'accompagner aux Tuileries avec son amie mme de Mongennes. Et c'est donc flanqué de deux libertines, qu'il rencontre, à sa grande honte, mme de Lursay et Hortense. Sa méprise malheureuse sur la partie de campagne projetée par mme de Lursay l'éloigne d'Hortense alors qu'il cherche à s'en rapprocher. La leçon de morale entreprise par Versac place de l'Etoile, lieu peu propice à de longues dissertations sur les hommes et la société, à moins que ce ne soit par le symbolisme, figure parmi les excès auxquels s'est livré Crébillon pour faciliter la bonne marche de son roman. Excès pardonnables et vite oubliés si le lecteur se passionne pour le cœur de Meilcour.

Par contre, les portraits des *Egarements* ne présentent point les traits si décriés de Boileau. Tous les personnages se dressent devant nous tels que les voyait Meilcour: femmes vertueuses, femmes galantes et petits-maîtres. Etres réels et souvent complexes, habillés d'admirables qualités mais aussi de vices, de ridicules et de travers. Etres de caractère universel, tout aussi vrais aujourd'hui qu'ils l'étaient hier. Mme de Meilcour et mme de Mongennes, les personnages les plus effacés du roman, ne sont esquissés que d'un léger coup de plume, et pourtant toutes deux apparaissent caractérisées avec finesse et d'une main sûre. Hortense de Théville, seule, semble brossée à la Scudéry. Et n'est-ce pas justement pour faire ressortir l'aspect ridicule de l'engouement de notre jeune ami, tout ébloui par sa nouvelle passion?

L'importance des personnages varie suivant leur rôle, mais ils contribuent tous, plus ou moins directement, à l'éducation du jeune homme. Seul le personnage principal fera le sujet de notre analyse. Crébillon l'a-t-il vraiment puisé 'dans le sein de la nature' ou bien nous a-t-il proposé un être artificiel tel que les composaient les idéalistes du XVIIe siècle? Ce n'était pas son intention, car dans sa préface il nous avertit que nous verrons 'un homme tel qu'ils sont presque tous dans une extrême jeunesse'. Meilcour se juge, lui et sa jeunesse, avec une rare honnêteté: honnêteté acquise avec le temps, sans doute, après s'être aperçu combien les hommes se ressemblent, surtout dans leurs défauts.

Jeune homme désœuvré, émotif, à l'imagination ardente, il songe à dissiper son 'ennui intérieur', ce vague à l'âme, par la seule occupation digne d'un homme de la bonne société de ce temps là: 'le commerce des femmes'. Ainsi Meilcour décida de 'se faire une passion', comme on décide aujourd'hui de se trouver une occupation. Pure affaire d'esprit chez un naïf, inconscient de lui-même et du monde. Ce monde se réduisait alors à la société des hommes et des femmes qu'il rencontrait dans les salons où les jeunes filles n'apparaissaient que rarement dans ce début de siècle. Et Meilcour ne sait et ne peut choisir. Les femmes de ces salons

n'embrasent guère son cœur vide de jeune mondain, ou plutôt les sentiments éveillés par l'une sont aussitôt étouffés par l'autre.

Et déjà, nous remarquons ce qui nous apparaît être son plus grand défaut: l'inconstance. Une indécision molle le porte à s'arrêter sur un objet un instant, et sur un autre, l'instant d'après. Nullement maître de ses pensées, de ses désirs, de ses actions, on le voit à la merci des éléments comme un navire sans gouvernail. La timidité et un sentiment d'infériorité, bien cachés derrière une façade quelque peu orgueilleuse, le portent donc à fixer son choix sur mme de Lursay. Choix fixé par lui ou par elle? Il est difficile de le savoir; sans doute choix réciproque, guidé par l'intuition, un désir d'indulgence de part et d'autre. Le choix n'est pas accidentel, il ne peut être plus logique, plus réaliste. Mme de Lursay, symbole de la mère, joue son rôle d'éducatrice jusqu'au bout. Meilcour est trop effarouché pour se poser en agresseur, et une femme de trente-cinq à quarante ans, 'extrêmement liée avec sa mère', 'd'une beauté majestueuse' peut parfaitement lui imposer respect et admiration. Ceinte de l'auréole de la connaissance, elle est donc poursuivie, sinon pour elle-même, du moins pour son utilité, dans l'espoir d'obtenir un peu de cette connaissance sentimentale, si désirée de Meilcour. Alors qu'il se laisse entraîner par une séduction adroite, il résiste malgré tout, autant par timidité et ignorance que par un désir sincère de mener des relations basées sur des sentiments solides. Un besoin de vérité est à la source de son innocent manège de résistance. Il est vrai qu'il n'ose déclarer sa flamme à mme de Lursay par amour-propre, 'Non, vous ne m'aimerez pas', mais il est aussi vrai qu'il ne peut s'y résoudre avant de s'être assuré de la sincérité des sentiments de cette dame. Et cela, en dépit de ses manifestations, puisque 'tout ce qu'elle faisait n'était rien pour moi, et elle ne pouvait pas encore se résoudre à m'avouer sérieusement qu'elle répondait à mes désirs.'[2]

Nous trouvons donc, à la racine de cette liaison une certaine soif de vérité, de pureté de sentiments, tout à côté de ce désir

[2] *Les Egarements du cœur et de l'esprit* (Paris 1736-1738); nous citons l'édition du Club français du livre (Paris 1953), p.31.

moins louable de se créer une passion 'telle qu'elle put être.' Cette passion, qu'il avait cru pouvoir se créer en dehors de toute considération pour son objet, n'apparaît plus à l'état brut de simple nécessité mondaine. Meilcour aimerait y attacher des sentiments plus nobles. Il aimerait que soient partagés l'estime et le respect qu'il ressent pour mme de Lursay. Son intuition naissante s'effraie d'une liaison dont son amour-propre aurait à souffrir. Il maintient ce qu'il croit être son amour et sa déesse sur un piédestal. Aussi lorsqu'il découvre la supercherie de mme de Lursay, il se rebelle, souffre et pour la première fois éprouve un sentiment réel: la vengeance. Bafoué dans son amour-propre de novice et d'innocent, rien, semble-t-il, ne pourra l'apaiser jusqu'à ce qu'il ait crié son dégoût pour l'hypocrisie d'une vertu mensongère. Cette révolte contre le mensonge et l'hypocrisie marque chez lui la naissance du courage. Etre d'apparence médiocre et faible, il repousse la défaite, l'anéantissement, et se redresse face à l'ennemie. Animé soudain du courage tranquille des forts, sûrs de leur cause et de leur victoire, il s'attache jusqu'au bout à dévoiler et confondre l'objet de son mépris. S'il se laisse émouvoir par mme de Lursay n'est-ce pas autant par sa sincérité que par sa beauté? Le réalisme symbolisé par mme de Lursay, l'assouvissement des passions dont elle est l'objet, se trouvent tempérés par l'élan de Meilcour vers une forme idéalisée de l'amour. Cet amour, tout de noblesse et de sincérité, se concrétise dans la personne d'Hortense. A peine entrevue, inconnue, elle demeure inaccessible et le restera jusqu'au bout puisqu'elle semble destinée à un autre. L'idée de substituer l'amour idéal d'Hortense à celui de mme de Lursay lui effleure à peine l'esprit. Il aimerait 'acquérir l'une' et se 'conserver l'autre'. S'il se laisse entraîner vers mme de Lursay, en dépit de son amour croissant pour Hortense, ce n'est que pour satisfaire une curiosité sinon légitime, du moins excitée par le désœuvrement d'une vie vaine et futile. Et sans doute parce qu'il sait bien qu'il n'obtiendrait jamais de l'une ce qu'il espère de l'autre. Alors même que son cœur s'élance vers la jeune fille, son esprit s'attache à mme de Lursay, source de bontés possibles. Il combat des

remords qui déjà l'assaillent et l'accusent de 'perfidie', mais il s'applique à les étouffer pour poursuivre la conquête de l'indulgente dame. Et la conquête achevée, il se voit déchiré par les reproches de son cœur amoureux, entraîné par les désirs avilissants, tout à la fois 'ange et bête', et déjà sur la route des tristes compromis. Nous retrouvons en lui toutes les contradictions qui agitent les hommes et caractérisent si bien la nature humaine: la sincérité et l'hypocrisie, la fidélité et l'inconstance, le courage et la faiblesse, l'amour et la haine. Tantôt assoiffé d'idéalisme et tantôt se vautrant dans la boue, tel est l'homme, tel est Meilcour. Mais chez lui, tous ces sentiments ne sont qu'en puissance et émergent tout juste dans son âme d'adolescent. S'il nous irrite par son inconstance et sa superficialité, nous savons qu'il souffre et vit sa première prise de conscience avec la réalité, avec le monde et avec lui-même.

L'éducation sentimentale de Meilcour est un chef-d'œuvre de psychologie amoureuse, pleine d'élégance, de finesse, et de réalisme délicat. Mme de Lursay, amusée, divertie par son nouvel intérêt pour Meilcour, se forge un piédestal, s'y pose telle une déesse, inaccessible au cœur et à l'esprit du pauvre garçon. L'éveil d'un amour tout d'admiration et de respect, tel celui d'un chevalier pour sa dame, est donc le stade initial de l'orientation de mme de Lursay. Stade agréable, tout de pureté et de finesse, ou chacun se plaît à découvrir les sentiments de l'autre. Stade idéal, dans lequel les héros du XVIIe siècle se complaisaient et languissaient à longueur d'année. Mais l'amour-goût du XVIIIe a un but vers lequel on se dirige élégamment 'avec une pudeur apparente, celle des mots.'[3] Aussi mme de Lursay, très fine, très adroite, manie les conversations, offre des conseils à notre innocent, l'encourage à lui confier un amour certain et l'entraîne pas à pas vers une déclaration voilée, exquise et délicate. Et de là, rougissante, émue, elle accomplit un recul, non moins savant que son avance,

[3] Daniel Mornet, *La Pensée française au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris 1926), p.19.

et laisse Meilcour en proie à la plus folle agitation. Lui ne peut concevoir de plus cruel affront.

En le revoyant, elle se joue de son embarras, le taquine, lui laisse entrevoir ses sentiments, tantôt sévère, tantôt câline, s'offrant, se reprenant, et une fois encore le laisse dans un état affreux, ahuri, persuadé d'être haï. Mais mme de Lursay n'avait pas compté avec les coups du sort. Le lendemain, elle avait une rivale dans le cœur de Meilcour. Un Meilcour qui ne sait s'il doit ou ne doit pas rompre avec une dame dont le souvenir l'irrite déjà. Mais l'irrite-t-elle vraiment? A-t-il raison de l'abandonner? Comment peut-il être certain que cette jeune personne à peine entrevue, totalement inconnue, l'aimera? La reverra-t-il même? Que faire? Il aime deux femmes, mais 'ce qu'elles lui inspiraient toutes deux étaient différent.' Voilà un beau dilemme pour un innocent dont le seul désir est de se faire aimer. Dilemme également pour mme de Lursay qui ne peut s'expliquer logiquement l'indifférence de son protégé. Elle se méprend à son air langoureux et chagrin. Comment rétablir les positions sans blesser les convenances? Elle y réussit. Elle lui reproche sa froideur et s'indigne du changement survenu dans ses manières. S'imaginait-il donc un triomphe facile? Ne devait-elle pas combattre? Non, certes, il ne l'a jamais aimée. Elle le lui pardonne et consent même à oublier son amour. Il n'en fallait pas davantage pour faire faire la pirouette au cœur de Meilcour. A genoux, il lui jure amour et respect. Mais que répond-elle? Elle effectue une retraite élégante pour la tranquillité et le repos de son cœur. Après bien des manifestations de confiance et de réserve, dandinées devant l'esprit ahuri du pauvre Meilcour, elle lui offre de venir 'amuser sa solitude', lui en ayant vainement suggéré l'initiative. Il se retrouve seul et perplexe. Mme de Lursay consentirait-elle?

Mais nouveau coup du sort. Son amour soudain pour une inconnue, nourri par une imagination romanesque et une jalousie non moins soudaine, se trouve réveillé et aiguisé par la rencontre inopinée de la jeune personne. Il retarde son rendez-vous chez mme de Lursay, le cœur trop plein de sa belle inconnue.

Après beaucoup d'hésitations, il ne s'y rend que fort tard. Donc politesses froides, taquineries, nouvelles manœuvres de mme de Lursay, très indulgente et très belle ce soir-là, puis une autre pirouette du cœur de Meilcour qui avoue: 'Elle profita de tout l'amour que j'avais pour mon inconnue. . . . Sans réfléchir sur ce que je faisais, sans même que je pusse former une idée distincte, je la suivis' (p.60).

Cette transférence de sentiments n'est nullement invraisemblable, et ni lui, ni mme de Lursay n'en étaient conscients. Se croyant l'objet de tous ces transports d'amour bien timides — il lui avait pris la main — elle s'assura une position solide dans le cœur et l'esprit de Meilcour, flatta sa vanité et lui laissa accroire que l'aveu de son goût pour lui était 'le premier de cette nature' qu'elle ait fait de sa vie. Le pauvre innocent ne pouvait être plus touché. Alors qu'il se glorifie de sa conquête, s'enflamme le cœur et l'esprit pour mme de Lursay, celle-ci, par une manœuvre concertée et savante retarde son départ et le laisse face à face avec elle-même. Mais son imagination ne lui avait offert que la gloire de la conquête, elle avait négligé de le prévenir de l'embarras du face à face, du moment où il devrait affirmer sa masculinité. Et dans la scène des nœuds, devant une mme de Lursay à demi étendue sur un sofa, vantant sa vertu tout en offrant son amour, et un Meilcour agenouillé à ses pieds lui offrant fidélité et respect, nous assistons à un morceau de haute comédie. Pourtant, cette scène est très réaliste. Ce qui nous apparaît être hypocrisie infâme de la part de mme de Lursay n'est autre qu'un de ses leviers d'action pour s'assurer les premiers pas de Meilcour. Elle connaît son point faible, le point faible d'un tout jeune homme devant sa première conquête et elle aiguise avec adresse la gloire du triomphe. Cependant pour Meilcour, la nouveauté de la situation, son innocence, son trouble lui paralysent l'esprit et le retiennent au bord de l'action. Ce n'est que plus tard, à froid, qu'il mesure l'étendue du désastre. Mais malgré tout, son éducation se fait graduellement, comme il se doit. Il a atteint un certain degré de connaissance et conçoit aisément un succès possible. La préparation

psychologique du terrain est pour ainsi dire achevée. Du moins, c'est ce que nous sommes portés à croire. Mais il n'en est rien. Alors que notre héros est amplement imprégné de la vertu de sa dame et du respect qu'il lui doit, Versac, en visite chez mme de Meilcour déchire le voile. Avec une brutalité complaisante, il étale, devant Meilcour horrifié, la vie de la prude et hypocrite mme de Lursay. Des détails précis ne l'autorisent pas à douter de la véracité de Versac. Il se voit, lui Meilcour, le naïf, dupe de sa bêtise et de sa crédulité. Son amour-propre, cinglé au vif, se promet une cruelle vengeance.

La déesse tombée de son piédestal, nous entrons dans une autre phase de son développement. Son respect et son admiration pour mme de Lursay se transforment en mépris intense. Peut-être a-t-il, à ce moment, perdu son âme d'adolescent? Peut-être devient-il homme dans sa découverte douloureuse de la réelle mme de Lursay, femme coquette et non-vertueuse, femme humaine et non-déesse? Découverte toujours si pénible chez ceux qui ont été animés par des sentiments sincères, ne fut-ce que pour quelques instants. C'est à ce moment qu'il retrouve Hortense, entre en contact avec la galante mme de Senanges et entreprend sa conquête afin d'aiguiser la jalousie de la jeune fille. C'est aussi le moment de la méprise jalouse et ridicule de mme de Lursay et de leurs premières querelles. Cependant après l'épisode hypocrite et quelque peu gênant de la scène des nœuds, mme de Lursay laisse apparaître son vrai moi. La sincérité de ses sentiments perce sous les conseils et les reproches jaloux dont elle abreuve le jeune Meilcour. Mais il se dérobe, agacé, et déploie vis-à-vis d'elle une attitude de plus en plus raide et désinvolte. Il s'est aperçu à son grand désarroi que le cœur d'Hortense appartient à un autre et la douleur de la perdre ne peut être adoucie par la conquête de mme de Lursay. Il doit en même temps subir les assauts de mme de Senanges et de mme de Mongennes. Pris entre ces trois femmes, qu'il méprise, il se désole 'avec un extrême chagrin à la violence' qu'on lui fait. Il prend conscience de lui-même, absorbé dans le dédale de ses chagrins amoureux, et il semble

acquérir de la fermeté. A deux reprises successives, il oppose un refus froid et catégorique à mme de Lursay, et l'amour qu'il ressentait pour elle, il y a encore quelques jours, s'est soudain transformé en une haine implacable.

Bien déterminé à rompre avec elle, sans savoir exactement comment le lui dire, ce n'est que dans le but de poursuivre Hortense, qu'il décide de lui rendre visite. Ce soir là, il souhaitait 'son indifférence avec une extrême joie', et l'habile mme de Lursay la lui offrit. Elle joua son dernier atout, le traita avec politesse, mais d'un air si détaché qu'il crut vraiment à un changement subi de ses sentiments. Son amour-propre s'éveille encore une fois, et peu flatté d'un abandon aussi profond et aussi rapide, il cherche à pénétrer la cause de l'inconstance de la bonne dame. Sa joie s'effondre, lui qui avait espéré et projeté cet abandon. Ses sentiments l'inquiètent et il commence à s'analyser. Il s'absorbe dans le pourquoi de ses sentiments à elle et de ses sentiments à lui. Mais rien n'échappait à la fine mme de Lursay, et alors qu'il s'enfonce dans un mutisme distrait, elle excite sa jalousie avec délice, en flirtant avec l'un de ses invités et exploite 'son stratagème tout usé qu'il était.' Pour Meilcour, il était nouveau. Aussi se laisse-t-il envoûter, et piqué par une vanité d'amoureux évincé, il se prépare à la quitter en même temps que le soi-disant rival. Il interprète le départ de celui-ci comme une ruse de mme de Lursay, ruse qu'il se promet séance tenante de dévoiler. Ruse hypocrite, qu'il désire utiliser pour satisfaire sa vengeance et la confondre. Il feint son propre départ et se retrouve seul avec elle, fâché d'avoir 'tant de choses à lui dire.' Mais il se maîtrise avec beaucoup de fermeté et donne libre cours à sa vengeance. Nous assistons à un dernier combat où l'esprit et la logique s'entremêlent et se choquent avec élégance. Mme de Lursay accepte gentiment toutes les imperti-nences de Meilcour, l'embarrasse par son esprit réaliste, et le couvre de ridicule. Femme sage, elle le traite en enfant, lui explique la genèse de ses sentiments et le confond par sa sincérité. Meilcour est peut-être le dernier égarement de cette indulgente dame, mais loin d'être ridicule, il nous apparaît comme la transmutation de

sentiments maternels longtemps étouffés. Sa passion sincère est éclairée par un réalisme douloureux et si elle a quelquefois joué la coquette, nous savons que son amour pour un être aussi jeune n'est point un sentiment passager. Alors qu'elle résiste une dernière fois en lui offrant son amitié, il se jette à ses pieds et s'abandonne à 'son crime.'

Si cette aventure très réaliste dans l'analyse d'un cœur neuf et timide, ignorant de lui-même et des autres, nous dépeint les angoisses d'une éducation amoureuse, il semble peut-être outré qu'elle ait été vécue avec une personne d'âge aussi mûr. Pourtant ce choix d'apparence invraisemblable permet une éducation complète, moins choquante, moins douloureuse et moins dégradante que ne l'aurait été celle d'une mme de Mongennes. Mme de Lursay n'est que décence, bonté, indulgence. Tout s'est bien passé selon les règles de l'honneur et de la bienséance, car la sensible et charmante mme de Lursay, sans être précieuse, retient tout de même dans sa conquête les raffinements si chers aux précieuses. Elle rougit, pâlit, baisse les yeux comme une jeune fille, et en vraie platonicienne ne peut songer à capituler sans soumettre son amour à de longs et violents combats. Du moins c'est ce dont elle persuade son jeune ami. Si son cœur la guide, son esprit en reste toujours le maître, et l'élégance règle la vie de cette aimable personne. Aussi savons-nous gré à Crébillon de nous avoir présenté un réalisme gracieux empreint des bienséances et de l'honneur de l'idéalisme.

L'éducation morale des *Mémoires* se présente sous trois aspects: dans notre connaissance de Meilcour adolescent et de sa première aventure, dans les réflexions de Meilcour homme mûr sur cette première aventure, dans les leçons de morale offertes au profit du jeune homme et des jeunes lecteurs. Nous avons remarqué la grande part de l'élément comique introduit par Crébillon dans son personnage de Meilcour. Elément comique qui magnifie fortement les volte-face du cœur de cet adolescent pour rendre son inconstance plus ridicule. Car l'inconstance est bien l'un des grands travers des êtres humains et surtout des êtres jeunes, que ce

soit au point de vue sentimental ou autre. Leurs affections fondées sur les notions les plus superficielles ne sont trop souvent que de courte durée. Quelle est donc la source de l'attachement soudain de Meilcour pour Hortense? Rien d'autre que sa jeunesse et sa beauté. Il construit le personnage d'Hortense par l'imagination et l'affuble de toutes les qualités de l'esprit et de l'âme. Peut-être est-elle cette jeune fille remarquable et parfaite telle qu'il se l'imagine; mais ce ne peut être une certitude acquise qu'après une longue connaissance. Et le malheureux garçon ne lui a parlé que deux fois et à peine. Il semble bien être représenté comme la victime de cette nourriture insipide: le roman. Par trois fois, Crébillon dévoile leur influence pernicieuse sur la pensée de Meilcour. Au lieu de se méfier de son élan subit causé par l'attrait physique qu'il éprouve pour Hortense, Meilcour le justifie car cette passion naissait bien comme 'un de ces coups de surprise qui caractérisent dans les Romans les grandes aventures'. Esprit crédule, il a cru trouver dans les romans un principe d'action pour diriger sa vie. Alors qu'il recherche la jeune fille aux Tuileries, il se remémore 'toutes les occasions' qu'il avait 'lues dans les Romans de parler à sa Maitresse' et se trouve bien déconfit de ne pouvoir en faire usage.

Dans son unique entretien avec Hortense, nous mesurons sa conception romanesque de l'amour et de la vie. Alors que Hortense nous frappe par sa logique et son esprit réaliste, il semble se perdre dans l'aventure et le fabuleux. Pour lui, des amours contrariées ne peuvent être cause de tristesse, bien au contraire, elles donnent prise à toutes les manifestations rocambolesques de son esprit surexcité et amoureux du bizarre. Il ne suppose rien de mieux pour accroître l'amour que les stratagèmes auxquels les amants doivent se livrer pour dépister 'les jaloux' et 'les surveillants.' Lorsqu'elle se plaint de l'inconstance des hommes, suite souvent malheureuse d'un amour contrarié, il oppose la liberté d'aimer comme en étant la vraie cause, sans même se rendre compte que sa propre passion pour Hortense est née au moment où il avait toute liberté d'aimer mme de Lursay et d'en être aimé.

Son imagination n'est pas libre, elle apparaît être la proie de la fiction dont il a abreuvé ses journées de jeune oisif.

Mais c'est certainement dans ses réflexions d'homme mûr que Meilcour a mesuré toute l'étendue des ravages d'une 'éducation modeste'. Nous pouvons cependant interpréter cette modestie de deux façons. Premièrement en tant que louange pour sa mère qui, 'simple et sans art' a su lui inculquer ce sentiment et contraindre son orgueil d'adolescent. Deuxièmement en tant que reproche sur la médiocrité de sa formation intellectuelle. Mieux armé pour faire face à la vie, son apprentissage se serait avéré plus facile et il aurait évité tous les faux pas avilissants dont il ressent encore l'amertume. Il reconnaît tous les torts de son siècle et de sa personnalité. La noblesse à laquelle il appartient de droit avait été enchaînée par Louis XIV dans ce cercle doré où elle évoluait contrainte et inutile. Les guerres terminées, aucune occupation n'était digne d'elle et seules les campagnes menées dans le domaine de l'amour intéressaient ces esprits ardents et guerriers. Aussi trouvons-nous dans les réflexions de Meilcour une certaine attitude querelleuse. Il s'attarde sur sa conception erronée de l'amour et des femmes et les oppose à la conception de son temps, alors inconnue de lui, puisqu'il ne connaissait que l'amour dépeint dans les romans. Il regrette profondément l'amour courtois d'autrefois, durable, solide, et nous laisse deviner combien ses expériences amoureuses, superficielles et hâtives, ont été douloureuses. Son opinion des femmes reflète le peu de plaisir éprouvé dans leur commerce; l'insincérité, la coquetterie, la superficialité, l'infidélité, voilà leur apanage. Le sarcasme et le mépris percent sous sa présentation de mme de Lursay et il semble attaquer plus particulièrement la femme à 'l'âge où ses charmes commencent à décroître'. Il rougit encore d'avoir été la dupe et l'amusement de mme de Lursay. Ne regrette-t-il pas de s'être fait objet? Ne se révolte-t-il pas d'avoir joué un rôle, d'avoir été 'chosifié' par la société pour acquérir sa réalité d'homme? Etre jeune et faible, il regrette d'avoir eu 'le malheur' de devoir son éducation à la perte de sa liberté.

Pourtant Meilcour avait été averti par les uns et par les autres des pièges que la nature tend aux jeunes. Mais comme la plupart des conseils, ils n'ont guère impressionné son esprit vide d'expériences et avide de nouveautés. Il avait écouté la leçon sur l'amour adressée à Hortense et dirigée plus particulièrement vers les jeunes filles. Il aurait pu en tirer son profit. Une dame, compagne d'Hortense et sans doute sa parente, analyse, dans les âmes vertueuses, les premières manifestations de l'amour, le travail sournois de l'imagination trop habile à l'entretenir et le rôle joué par la raison pour assurer le soutien de nos passions. Nous retrouvons là les pensées du *Dialogue des morts* de Fontenelle: 'l'homme est dans le cœur', il a toujours 'les mêmes penchants, sur lesquels la raison n'a aucun pouvoir.' Et c'est bien la conclusion de cette dame sensée. Bien loin de laisser à la raison son rôle d'éclaireuse, nous nous appliquons à l'étouffer ou à l'utiliser pour fortifier nos passions. Mme de Meilcour, elle-même, a prévenu son fils contre 'les coups de foudre' si fréquents à cet âge tendre et sans expérience. Mais il semble bien que Meilcour ait décidé de faire la sourde oreille, même à l'ironique avertissement de mme de Senanges, femme expérimentée s'il en est. Ne lui dépeint-elle pas exactement son état d'esprit vis-à-vis de mme de Lursay? Ne lui présente-t-elle pas en femme réaliste les écueils d''un âge où tout plaît . . . pressé d'avoir une affaire . . . on s'ennuie de l'avoir, on en rougit, et l'on quitte.' Meilcourt rougit encore et rougira toujours de n'avoir pas su suivre tous ces conseils désintéressés.

Il étonne beaucoup le comte de Versac par sa naïveté, son ignorance du monde et des femmes. Aussi, par amitié, Versac s'empresse-t-il d'éclairer Meilcour de son expérience personnelle. Les conseils du comte de Versac présentent un intérêt tout particulier. S'il nous apparaît quelque peu cynique, à la don Juan ou à la Casanova, nous admirons sa franchise et sa révolte devant la société hypocrite et décadente du XVIIIe siècle. D'un réalisme brutal, il juge les femmes et la société en ennemies dont il faut se jouer pour maintenir sa liberté. Lui aussi a été formé par mme de Lursay et s'offense de sa fausse pruderie. Il la déchire avec méchan-

ceté alors qu'il lui préfère mme de Senanges, odieuse et indécente libertine. Mais il n'est lui-même qu'un petit-maître guidé par l'intérêt et affublé de tous les travers dont il accable les femmes avec tant de véhémence. Reprocher aux autres des vices et des ridicules que l'on étale soi-même avec grande complaisance est l'un des défauts de tous les personnages non-vertueux de Crébillon. Donc, Versac recommande tout d'abord à son jeune ami de faire son devoir, c'est-à-dire d'établir des relations avec mme de Senanges, car il a besoin d'une femme qui le 'mette dans le monde.' Conseil peu sage, mais exigé par les mœurs du temps. La subordination sociale de l'homme à la femme explique l'animosité aiguë de leurs relations sentimentales. Situation sans doute très humiliante pour l'homme et créée par les femmes, puisque, seules, elles jouaient un rôle civilisateur. Aussi la femme est une ennemie à vaincre et la société une source de corruption pour vaincre. Pour Versac, comme pour Fontenelle, les hommes ne sont dirigés que 'par les préjugés de la coutume et de l'esprit'; aussi, prêche-t-il la souplesse de l'esprit, l'adaptation et la conformité aux usages de son siècle. Il faut connaître le monde et ses travers, étudier le caractère des hommes et leur dissimuler le nôtre, sacrifier sa vanité à son intérêt, jouer la comédie pour subjuguer la société hypocrite et stupide et ne pas devenir sa victime. Alors que le pauvre Meilcour ne sait que penser d'une morale aussi utilitaire et perverse, Versac lui avoue avoir été, lui aussi, horrifié par la superficialité et la corruption des hommes. Mais le seul moyen de réussir dans le monde est bien de se parer de tous les vices et de tous les ridicules posés sur le chemin du succès. Si les conseils de Versac nous apparaissent outrés, sa satire de la société n'en est pas moins juste, mordante et tout à fait propre à jouer le rôle moralisateur que lui destinait Crébillon.

III

Les Egarements marquent bien un tournant dans l'histoire du roman du XVIIIe siècle. Beaucoup plus réaliste par le fond que par

la forme, l'éducation sentimentale du jeune Meilcour a donné naissance à un nouveau genre littéraire et nous retrouvons certains aspects de ses *Mémoires* dans *La Confession d'un enfant du siècle* de Musset. Par une présentation habile de 'l'utile et l'amusant', nous avons assisté à la corruption systématique d'un jeune homme par une société frivole, beaucoup plus soucieuse de la forme que du fond, beaucoup plus intéressée aux apparences qu'à la réalité profonde de l'homme. Meilcour souffre, poussé par les uns et par les autres tel un pion sur un échiquier, incapable de penser par lui-même, anxieux de maintenir ses quelques vertus, mais emporté par le courant, mal préparé à vivre sa vie d'homme, tout juste capable de gonfler le flot de ces êtres assez malheureux pour se révolter quand face à face avec eux-mêmes, mais incapables du courage des hommes forts pour briser avec le courant. Crébillon a-t-il visé à censurer les mœurs de son siècle ou s'est-il contenté de nous laisser la peinture d'une aristocratie volage, amoureuse du plaisir, et peu soucieuse de permettre à l'homme le libre exercice de son esprit et de son cœur? Seule, notre connaissance de ce 'peintre des fêtes galantes' peut nous révéler sa pensée.

The Literary technique of the first two Mémoires *of Beaumarchais against Goezman*

by John Hampton

Beaumarchais's first four memoranda written during the Goezman affair have been analysed often enough by biographers interested mainly in elucidating the facts of the case. This is not my present purpose. I wish rather to study the techniques employed by the author, and if possible to show how the success of the first two *mémoires* followed from the dialectical skill of Beaumarchais, as distinct from the rightness of his case—which, I hasten to add, I find no reason to question. Readers of Beaumarchais are already familiar with the general spirit in which the memoranda are written, but there is room for a closer study of these writings, particularly in conjunction with the official records of the proceedings, preserved in the Archives nationales (carton X².1338).

It may be useful to preface this study with a few remarks about the status of the memorandum in eighteenth century legal practice. In the case we are concerned with, the sequence of events was as follows: after Goezman had made his *plainte en corruption* against Beaumarchais, the *procureur général* instituted proceedings, 21 July 1773, nominating as *rapporteur* the *conseiller* Doë de Combault. Questioning took place in private, the records being classified under the title of *informations*; this was followed by a series of *interrogatoires*; later the people involved were called for

their *récollements*, when their former answers were read back to them, and they were given the opportunity of reaffirming what they had said, of modifying or of withdrawing it; finally there came a long series of *confrontations* of one person with another, at which each had the opportunity to cross-examine, as we would no doubt call it, a hostile witness. Commenting on this procedure, Beaumarchais writes that 'lorsqu'un accusé a fait le tour entier des confrontations actives et passives, il connaît le procès à-peu-près aussi bien que ceux qui doivent le juger.'[1] Beaumarchais would, like any one else involved in the confrontations, hear the relevant statements made by his opponents read out to him, and was able to make notes on them. Thus he had sufficient access to the documents to become acquainted with the substance of what everyone was saying, and no doubt it was largely from his notes, and aided by his personal encounters, that he composed his interpretation of events.

Beaumarchais's first two memoranda[2] relate to the above stage of the proceedings. The third and fourth[3] are not so simple, for they are essentially concerned with answering replies to the first two, as well as with discussing the significance of subsequent events.

Camus tells that the use of the memorandum was essential in the administration of justice in his day. He writes that 'il est peu d'affaires importantes où l'on n'en imprime'. They were meant to summarize and clarify the arguments advanced in favour of the

[1] *Supplément au Mémoire à consulter, pour Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais* (De l'Imprimerie de Quillau, 1773), p.10. In all my quotations I shall be following the spelling and punctuation of this edition, except that I shall substitute *et* for the frequent &, and shall use the generally accepted spelling *Goezman*. In point of fact, both the husband and the wife sign, as one would expect, *Goezmann*.

[2] *Mémoire à consulter pour Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais* (De l'Imprimerie de Valleyre l'aîné, 1773). For the *Supplément* see note 1.

[3] *Addition au Supplément du Mémoire à consulter, pour Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais* (De l'Imprimerie de J. G. Clousier, [n.d.]); *Quatrième mémoire à consulter pour Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais* (De l'Imprimerie J.G. Clousier... 10 février 1774).

party for whom they were written. 'Quelquefois un mémoire a pour objet de faire connaître au public une affaire importante, dont l'instruction se fait en secret; de justifier, par exemple, un accusé'.[4] He is referring to the memoranda written by the *avocat*, however, not by the accused himself. The status of such publications as those of Beaumarchais is not so clear, but evidently they required the support of a lawyer, whose own memorandum, printed as a *consultation*, appeared immediately after that of the accused. Thus if we compare the relatively short *consultations* which follow each of Beaumarchais's *mémoires*, we can often see the same arguments reappearing, but in *résumé* and in more conventional form. Both the *mémoires* of Beaumarchais and the *consultations* are, it must be remembered, ostentibly addressed to the judges, though in fact Beaumarchais was much more concerned to mobilise public opinion in his support. As Loménie[5] says, he was pleading his case 'par la fenêtre.' We may also note that, no doubt at least in part as a result of the commotion caused by the *mémoires* printed during the Goezman affair, an attempt was made to end this practice the following year, when a royal declaration of 18 March 1774 forbade such publications: 'Faisons pareillement très expresses inhibitions et défenses aux parties de faire imprimer, et aux imprimeurs d'imprimer aucuns mémoires à consulter, quand même ils seraient signés, sauf aux avocats à rappeler dans leurs consultations les faits et les questions sur lesquels ils sont consultés, en observant, toutefois, la modération et la décence convenables à la noblesse de leur profession'.[6]

The *Mémoire à consulter* is primarily concerned with the basic facts of the affair, so that when Beaumarchais comes to write his *Supplément* he can refer (p.3) to the *fond du procès* as being *connu par mon premier mémoire*. Seen from this point of view, the first

[4] A. G. Camus, *Lettres sur la profession d'avocat* (Paris 1777), p.150. The first edition is dated 1772, according to F. Liouville, *De la profession d'avocat* (Paris 1864), p.209.

[5] *Histoire de Beaumarchais*, i.320.

[6] *Déclaration du roi, portant règlement concernant les mémoires à consulter* (Versailles 18 mars 1774), art.II.

memorandum appears as a perfect example of clear exposition. After the conventional preamble addressed to the judges, the author summarizes his relationship with Duverney, then narrates the incidents leading up to the loss of his case before the *parlement*. This is followed by an account of later developments, up to the institution of proceedings against Beaumarchais. Then comes a section dealing with the intervention of Arnaud and Marin, which is kept apart from the main argument and presented as the *hors-d'œuvre* which in the mind of Beaumarchais it really was. The whole exposition is rounded off with a series of *réflexions* in which a final clarification of the argument is achieved, and possible objections answered.

The structure of the *Supplément* is different. We must remind ourselves, of course, that this is not a memorandum in the formal sense, since it does not answer replies to the first one, nor take the basic argument any further, but is mainly concerned with illustrating the events which have taken place since[7] the investigations into Beaumarchais's conduct vis-à-vis Goezman have begun. The potentialities for graphic portrayal of character and for the writing of narrative and dialogue are obviously much greater here, and indeed Beaumarchais reaches the heights of comedy in these pages. After a short introduction he divides his material into two sections, one devoted to mme Goezman and one to her husband. But whereas the first part is either dialogue, or reflexions on the dialogue, written with a lightness of heart and a delicacy of touch so characteristic of the dramatist, the second half, which includes a long and difficult discussion of the declarations which Goezman had wrung out of Lejay, is quite different in tone.

The first *Mémoire* and the *Supplément*, then, comprise the first bombshell which Beaumarchais throws at his enemies. They also give us the first real example of Beaumarchais the dialectician.

[7] except the two *Déclarations* of Lejay, which preceded these investigations.

He had, as is known, written memoranda before this, for example in connection with the La Blache case, but never before had he been at bay as now, and this seems to have brought out the genius of the author as never before. Faced with danger and the supreme urgency to defend himself, he reacts with unsurpassed wit and verve. Yet this does not seem to have come as the result of a conscious will to shine. The situation is far too grave for that. Will he not cry out impatiently in the *Addition* (p.4): 'Eh! Messieurs, laissez mon stile, et tâchez seulement de réformer le vôtre'? And in the same work he rejects criticism of his *légèreté* as an annoying irrelevancy.[8] The quality of his style can hardly have been his main preoccupation at such a moment. Yet the style comes of its own accord, arising out of his very urgency to say what is important and to the point, and in this way it carries a conviction which the rhetoric of his opponents completely lacks. A good example of an attitude which Beaumarchais instinctively avoids striking is that of injured innocence, in spite of the injustices inflicted upon him.

Yet Goezman is stupid enough to open his own memorandum thus: 'Une voix s'est élevée; le malheur des circonstances, le plaisir méchant d'inculper un magistrat dans les conjonctures actuelles, s'est communiqué comme par une contagion secrète: il s'est formé un orage qui s'est fixé sur ma tête; mais ma constance est restée la même: l'innocence au milieu des persécutions est comme un roc au milieu des flots de la mer: le calme arrive enfin, et les vagues les plus impétueuses ne jettent que de l'écume sur le rivage'.[9] The opening words of Beaumarchais's *Mémoire à consulter* show a marked superiority over those of Goezman. He

[8] 'Enfin vous n'aurez ni trève ni repos de moi, que vous n'ayez répondu *cathégoriquement* à tous les faits graves dont je vous charge devant le Parlement et la Nation; ou que vous n'ayez passé condamnation sur tous les chefs: car de vous amuser à critiquer la légéreté de mon stile, et donner ma gaieté pour un manque de respect à nos Juges, c'est se mocquer du monde: il est bien question de cela!' (p.3).

[9] *Observations pour m. de Goezmann, conseiller de grand'chambre* (Imprimerie de M. Lambert, 1773).

is firm and trenchant, revealing an ability to combine in a few brief phrases a wealth of sentiments, ranging from respect to disdain, from humility to self-affirmation, all neatly but not too artificially balanced, and each phrase, like the passage as a whole, full of promise and excitement: 'Pendant que le public s'entretient d'un procès dont le fond et les détails excitent sa curiosité; pendant que des gazetiers vendus aux intérêts de différents partis, le défigurent de toutes les maniéres; pendant que les méchants accumulent sur moi les plus absurdes calomnies, et ne disputent que sur le choix des atrocités; enfin, pendant que les honnêtes gens consternés gémissent sur la foule de maux dont un seul homme peut être à la fois assailli; laissons jaser l'oisiveté, dédaignons les libelles, plaignons les méchants, rendons grâces aux honnêtes gens, et présentons ce mémoire à mes juges, comme un hommage public de mon respect pour leurs lumiéres, et de ma confiance en leur intégrité .

The rest of the preamble makes three points of fundamental importance: it contains a carefully written admonition to the *parlement* not to 'confondre une querelle particuliére dont ils sont juges, avec ces grands démêlés où le Corps entier de la magistrature aurait ses droits à soutenir ou son honneur à venger', then an arresting definition of the essential issue, and finally a word to the public concerning the necessity for the memorandum. Throughout, Beaumarchais is careful to maintain an attitude of respect for the judges as a body, thus throwing into relief the role of Goezman as an unfortunate exception. The whole trend of this early part is to eliminate irrelevant issues, with a view to presenting the reader with such a simple question that the answer will arise with almost Cartesian self-evidence. The definition of the question is the rock upon which the whole defence is built. Beaumarchais cannot deny having offered money and a present to mme Goezman, so he must build his argument upon the fact that he was constrained, and he must impress this upon the reader's mind with an arresting formula, containing within itself the seeds of the author's conclusion. Thus we are invited to pass an act of

judgment which, once made, will make escape impossible: 'La question qui occupe aujourd'hui les Chambres assemblées, est de savoir si la nécessité de répandre l'or autour d'un Juge pour en obtenir une audience indispensable, et qu'on n'a pu se procurer autrement, est un genre de corruption punissable, ou seulement un malheur digne de compassion'. Never, throughout the complications of the ensuing battle, does Beaumarchais retreat from the security of this bastion. It will be seen that it takes the form of an abstract or general formula, of a *principle*, of which his case will be a particular example, and which the *mémoires* will illustrate and dramatize. But the heart of the matter being thus stated as a general principle, it will be easy for the readers to identify themselves with Beaumarchais *through* this. The author is not therefore asking for sympathy merely for himself, but for the support of his readers in his fight for human rights. In this respect he strikes a very different note from Goezman, who confines himself to a purely egocentric self-defence, extolling his own virtue and courage, but remaining remote from his readers. Beaumarchais, however, is able to assert himself firmly but without narcissism: 'Forcé d'employer ma foible plume, au défaut de toute autre, dans une affaire où la terreur écarte loin de moi tous les Défenseurs, où il faut des injonctions réitérées des Magistrats pour qu'on me signe au Palais la plus juste Requête; détruisons toute idée de corruption par le simple exposé des faits; et ne craignons point qu'on m'accuse de tomber dans le défaut trop commun de les altérer devant la Justice'. And finally he gives precisely the reason for writing his memorandum as is suggested in the work of Camus referred to above: 'Uniquement destiné à soulager l'attention de mes Juges, ce Mémoire sera l'histoire exacte et pure de tout ce qui tient à la question agitée. Je n'y dirai rien qui ne soit constant au procès. Les faits qui me sont personnels y seront affirmés positivement. Ce que j'ai su par le témoignage d'autrui portera l'empreinte de la circonspection; et si ce Mémoire n'a pas toute la méthode qui caractérise les ouvrages de nos Orateurs du Barreau, au moins il réunira le double

avantage de ne contenir que des faits véritables, et de fixer l'opinion flottant du Public sur le fond d'une affaire dont le secret de la procédure empêchera qu'il soit jamais bien instruit par une autre voie'.

The rest of the *Mémoire à consulter* consists largely of an account of the events leading up to the institution of the inquiry: Beaumarchais's attempts to obtain a genuine audience with Goezman, the abortive arrangements with mme Goezman, the loss of his case, the disappearance of the fifteen *louis*, the growth of rumours and the final *dénonciation* by Goezman. These events, *qua* events, are not of prime interest to our present inquiry, but it must be noted that whereas in the memoranda of his opponents these incidents fall quite flat, and make merely a tedious and incoherent string of happenings, Beaumarchais is able to see in them—and with good reason—an absorbing narrative which has all the characteristics of a *roman d'aventures* or a *drame intrigué*. In no sense does he invent anything, but, with the true journalist's flair, and also with a sense of drama born of his own total involvement in the question, he is able to throw a certain light on the events which endows them with the glory of art. At the risk of appearing to make fiction out of fact, it is worth noticing the narrative structure which Beaumarchais creates in the course of his exposition of what has happened.

First, the story is sparked off by a short passage which is both a recapitulation and an anticipation of what is to follow. The reader sees that he is about to be confronted with a case of *petites causes, grands effets*, and awaits the inevitable surprises: 'O Monsieur Duverney! lorsque vous signâtes cet arrêté de compte par lequel vous vous reconnoissiez mon débiteur, le premier Avril 1770, vous étiez bien loin de prévoir que trois ans après, à pareil jour, sur le refus d'acquitter votre engagement par un légataire à qui vous laissiez plus d'un million, M. Goezman de Colmar seroit nommé Rapporteur; que je perdrois en quatre jours mon procès et cinquante mille écus; et que ce Magistrat me dénonceroit ensuite au Parlement, comme ayant calomnié sa personne, après

avoir tenté de corrompre sa justice' (p.3). Beaumarchais, like Candide, is expelled from the earthly paradise of Duverney's protection, and suddenly finds himself the victim of a hostile world. But, unlike Voltaire's hero, he has not been brought up by Pangloss, and he is therefore ready to react energetically.

The situation has in it all the elements of drama, and can be analysed in terms of a formula, which would prescribe the building up of more and more tension with each major incident. Beaumarchais is in prison, while La Blache is free to canvass his own case with the judges. The author has therefore an imperative *need* to leave prison and visit the judges himself. He applies for permission to do this, but meets with an *obstacle* in the form of a refusal. Eventually he overcomes this obstacle by the device of dissimulation, in that he pretends to make a humble supplication for permission,[10] when in fact he feels nothing but rage at the injustice done to him. This is the reality which biographers have dwelt upon, but in the memorandum Beaumarchais does not insist upon the steps which he had to take in order to obtain conditional release from prison, first because it would obviously be unwise to do so in a memorandum designed to be read by his judges, secondly because it hardly fitted the image of himself which he was creating, and thirdly, and no doubt principally, because it would be a distraction in a story to which he wishes to give as rapid a movement as possible. However, the solution to this first problem proves to be a false one, since soon Goezman is appointed as his *rapporteur* and this most important man refuses to see him. Crisis. Despondency on the part of the protagonist: 'Ne sachant plus à quel parti m'arrêter, j'entrai en revenant chez une de mes sœurs, pour y prendre conseil, et calmer un peu mes sens' (p.5). Temptation comes in the form of information about mme Goezman's standing offer to procure audiences with her husband—at a price. Deliberation. Under pressure of circumstances, and therefore in the eyes of the reader morally whole,

[10] letter to the duc de La Vrillière, 21 March 1773 (Loménie, i.289).

Beaumarchais finally gives in; 'Je résistois, je bataillois; mais l'importance de voir M. Goezman étoit telle, et le tems pressoit si fort, que mes amis inquiets me conseilloient tous de ne pas hésiter' (p.5). The fateful decision is taken, but this too proves to be a false solution, for Goezman grants him only one audience, and that a completely unsatisfactory one. Beaumarchais's predicament is thus made worse by the very act which was meant to ease it, for now the author is not only defeated in his lawsuit with La Blache, but finds himself in a vulnerable position because of his dealings with mme Goezman. The first part of the 'plot' ends at this point, with the hero's fortunes at a low ebb, and with no solution in sight. The reader is eager for the next episode. And again one is reminded of the adventure story when the factor which gets the action under way once more proves to be a relatively obscure element which the reader had overlooked, but which now turns out to be decisive: the 15 *louis* have not been returned, though it is proved that the secretary did not receive them. Beaumarchais is perspicacious enough to see this and sufficiently courageous to act upon it. In this way he restores the balance between the two parties, and brings into view on the far horizon the possibility of a final triumph. The real battle has now begun.

What is important in all this is the fact that Beaumarchais has been quick enough to seize upon the dramatic quality of the story he is presenting, and so to arrange the telling that this quality has its full impact upon the reader. It is more than doubtful whether any of his opponents, had they been in this position, would have had the capacity thus to exploit fact with the tools of fiction. Yet, though he shows himself in his plays to be a master of the complicated, and sometimes obscure, plot, he is here seen to be primarily bent on *clarity*. To this end he refuses to mingle his story with extraneous elements. The interventions of Baculard d'Arnaud and of Marin are kept apart from the main narrative, and added in a special section, headed: 'Episode du Sieur d'Arnaud de Baculard' and 'Autre épisode très-important touchant le sieur Marin, Auteur de la Gazette de France'.

Arnaud was brought into the affair when he wrote a letter to Goezman, saying that Lejay had informed him that mme Goezman had rejected Beaumarchais's offers with indignation. But unfortunately for Arnaud, Lejay had by now retracted the statement which Goezman had suggested to him, and this retraction belied the truth of Arnaud's own statement. To have put the matter as baldly as I have just done would of course have carried little weight. Also, since it was a question here of challenging written evidence, it was important that Beaumarchais should write at this point with as much force as possible. A mere reference to the event would have been ineffective. Beaumarchais turns all this into a skilful little character study which throws doubt on the reliability of anything Arnaud might say in the future. The opening paragraph sets the tone in a few bold strokes: 'Tandis que tous ceux que le malheur engage dans cette affaire, gémissoient de la nécessité de repousser la calomnie par des défences légitimes; qui croira qu'un homme absolument étranger au procès, ait été assez ennemi de son repos pour venir se jetter imprudemment dans la mêlée; y jouer d'abord le rôle de conciliateur; puis prendre parti contre les accusés par une lettre signée de sa main; flotter ensuite dans une incertitude pusillanime; rétracter cet imprudent écrit, que des contradictions choquantes avoient déjà fait suspecter; et se donner par tant d'inconséquences en spectacle au Public empressé à juger les acteurs de cette étrange scène? Un tel homme existe pourtant; et c'est le sieur d'Arnaud de Baculard. Puisqu'il lui a plû de prendre part à la querelle, il faut développer sa conduite aux yeux de la Cour: elle n'est pas sans importance au procès' (p.18).

Beaumarchais then sets the scene for us: he meets Arnaud in the rue de Condé, and delivers a long speech about Lejay's forced declaration. From Arnaud's reply it is clear that he is misinformed about the facts of the case, and so Beaumarchais explains to him what has actually happened. Arnaud, who has hitherto maintained a hostile attitude, now changes: 'Le sieur d'Arnaud excusa sa vivacité sur son ignorance; blâma la foiblesse de le-Jay; condamna

la conduite de M. Goezman; s'étendit un peu sur la méchanceté des hommes; et m'assura qu'il alloit faire part de mes observations au sieur le-Jay. Qu'est-il arrivé? Que le sieur d'Arnaud a visité M. Goezman; que M. Goezman a visité le sieur d'Arnaud; et qu'enfin ce dernier a écrit une lettre apologétique au Magistrat, dans laquelle, après un éloge de ses vertus, il ajoute qu'il se croit obligé, pour l'honneur de la vérité, de lui apprendre d'office, *qu'un soir, étant chez le sieur le-Jay*, ce dernier lui fit voir une montre enrichie de diamans, très-belle, avec cent louis, *qu'il alloit rendre*, lui dit-il, à un ami de M. de Beaumarchais, *qui les lui avoit remis*, pour les présenter à Madame, *qui les avoit rejetés avec indignation*. Le sieur d'Arnaud ajoute qu'il ne doute point que le sieur le-Jay ne les ait rendus sur le champ' (p.19).

Thus we have a brief sketch of a coward and a hypocrite, presented, not in the form of a mere harangue, but by the comic juxtaposition of contradictions: Arnaud's promise to Beaumarchais and his subsequent deeds. The portrait gains in piquancy from the rigorous selection of significant detail from a mass of facts. For example, the letter from Arnaud, if quoted in full at this point, would have weakened the effect by dilution of the sketch. It is the artist who controls the pen of the defendant, and who interests the reader as well as merely persuading him.

In the passages referred to above, the only direct speech is put into the mouth of Beaumarchais. This helps to give emphasis to what he says, and leaves the rest comparatively distant and colourless. But in this episode concerning Marin dialogue is used extensively. The narrative is thus enlivened and thrown into relief as against the former episode, which after all has not the same importance. The purpose of this dialogue is patently not merely to pass information on to the reader, but to depict another character. Once more he is a sly person, but one whom we cannot confuse with Arnaud. Marin is more energetic and enterprising, quicker to put his cards on the table when pressed. For example, when Beaumarchais protests against the suggestion that they should let Lejay take all the blame for what has happened,

Marin replies: 'Eh! que vous importe que ce fripon de le-Jay soit sacrifié? ce n'est pas un grand malheur, si vous êtes tous hors d'une affaire qui intéresse aujourd'hui les Ministres, et où il n'y a que des coups à gagner' (p.20). In fact, most of this passage is taken up with dialogue, and this in turn is further animated by the comings and goings of the characters. Beaumarchais goes into his sister's house, and finds a crowd of people there; Marin arrives, agitated and bent on intervening; rebuffed by Beaumarchais and his friends, he leaves; he and Goezman scour Paris in search of Dairolles, unsuccessfully; Marin sends for Dairolles at seven o'clock in the morning; Dairolles goes straight to the court instead; return of Dairolles; return of Marin; more dialogue; Beaumarchais meets Marin on the Pont-neuf; dialogue.

By this time the author has built up the episode into a veritable helter-skelter worthy of his comedies: 'Je me rendis à l'instant chez ma sœur, que je trouvai en conversation animée avec une autre de mes sœurs. Le sieur Marin, me dirent-elles, a parlé de nouveau à Dairolles, cette après-midi; ils ont été long-temps ensemble. Le dernier est venu tout échauffé nous dire: "Comment trouvez-vous donc Marin, qui veut absolument que j'aille changer ma déposition?" Et sur ma résistance opiniâtre; "Vous direz, m'a-t-il ajouté, que c'est toute cette famille Beaumarchais qui vous a suggéré la première. Quel bien espérez-vous de tous ces gens-là? Abandonnez leurs intérêts, ne songez qu'aux votres. Par votre déposition de ce matin, vous perdez quatre ans de travaux accumulés pour obtenir les bonnes graces de M. le Duc de. . au moment peut-être où vous étiez prêt d'en recueillir le fruit. Allez, mon cher compatriote, allez-vous-en parler à Goezman ce soir, et sur-tout promettez-le-moi." Voilà, m'ajouterent mes sœurs, ce que Dairolles vient de nous apprendre: il a dans son premier mouvement raconté les mêmes choses à un de ses amis. Nous lui avons fait connoître le piége dans lequel on veut l'attirer. Il n'ira pas ce soir chez M. Goezman, quoiqu'il y soit attendu. Et moi, leur dis-je, je vais à l'instant instruire M. le Premier Président de cette nouvelle intrigue' (p.22). It is difficult for

the reader of such a story not to identify himself with the protagonist. The means by which this effect is brought about are primarily literary.

Beaumarchais closes his first memorandum with a series of *réflexions*, in which he recapitulates what he has said and answers possible objections. But although there is no narrative here, the verve with which he writes remains unabated. The discussion carries within itself a certain suggestion of dialogue, since the presence of the imaginary objector is always felt. Beaumarchais never writes impersonally, and never seems to lose contact with his reader. A good example of his style of arguing is this extract from this section: 'Mais, dira-t-on, c'est payer bien cher une audience que d'en donner cent louis. Certainement, c'est bien cher; et mes débats et les tentatives de ma sœur prouvent assez que nous l'avons pensé comme vous: mais réfléchissez que cinquante louis n'ont pas suffi pour m'obtenir la premiére audience, et qu'un bijou de mille écus surmonté de quinze louis, n'a pu me procurer la seconde, et vous conviendrez que ce qui vous semble aujourd'hui trop acheté, ne le parut pas encore assez alors. Quel homme, engagé dans les sables d'Afrique, ne payeroit pas un verre d'eau mille ducats dans un pressant besoin!' (p.24).

I have already indicated that the narrative aspect of the first *Mémoire* is its most prominent feature. But there is already some skilful character drawing, which will be developed in the *Supplément*. La Blache, as we have seen, remains for the most part in the background, so as not to complicate the argument unnecessarily. Yet Beaumarchais can suggest in a few words the unscrupulous and determined person he was dealing with: '... il poursuivoit sans relâche le jugement de son appel. Il faisoit plaider, il sollicitoit, il gagnoit les esprits; et moi j'étois en prison' (p.3). We have seen that the characters of Arnaud and Marin are blended in with the narrative. Perhaps the most interesting background characters are the Lejay couple, whom Beaumarchais depicts with tact and humanity. Lejay might well have come in for much vituperation at his hands for signing a false declaration

which incriminated him. Yet the author presents Lejay as the victim of his own weakness, and is quick to forgive him when, supported by his wife, he decides to stand firm for the truth. First of all he depicts the impact of fear on Lejay's mind, but only in so far as it awakens him to the realities of the situation: 'A peine les témoins sont-ils assignés, que le-Jay commence à trembler sur les conséquences de sa fausse déclaration. Dans le trouble de sa conscience, il va consulter Me. Gerbier, expose les faits tels qu'ils se sont passés, en reçoit le conseil de revenir à la vérité dans sa déposition; vient faire la même confession à M. le Premier Président; il la fait à quiconque a la patience de l'écouter' (p.16). Had Beaumarchais decided to paint us a portrait of a contemptible little man, Lejay would have had no means of hitting back. Instead, the author makes him into a somewhat pathetic hero, one who, though cowardly, just manages to redeem himself, helped by a push from behind: 'La Dame le-Jay, plus courageuse que son mari, proteste qu'aucun respect humain ne les empêchera plus de dire la vérité' (p.16). It is the lady who 'soutient son mari dans sa résolution'. Earlier Beaumarchais had analysed Lejay's character for the reader in an alleged dialogue between himself and the Premier Président: 'on dit que c'est un honnête homme, qui n'a contre lui que le défaut des âmes foibles, de se laisser affrayer facilement, et de céder sans résistance à l'impulsion d'autrui: la fausse déclaration qu'on lui a extorquée dans un Cabinet, il ne la soutiendra jamais dans un Greffe; et la vérité lui sortira par tous les pores à la premiére interrogation juridique qui lui sera faite' (p.16).

But naturally the two main characters in the drama are the Goezmans. Beaumarchais is circumspect in his approach to Goezman, not accusing him directly for the moment of collusion with his wife, but showing, ironically, how easy it would be for a less scrupulous person than himself to put an unfortunate interpretation on the role of the *rapporteur*: 'Il est très-probable! Heureusement il ne s'agit pas ici de me décider coupable sur des probabilités; mais seulement de juger sur des preuves si je le suis ou

non. Que diroit de moi M. Goezman, si, repoussant sur lui le bloc dont il veut m'écraser, je m'égarois aussi dans les conjectures, en disant: Lorsque Madame Goezman vendoit l'Audience de son mari, *il est très-probable* qu'il étoit de moitié dans le Traité; l'impossibilité d'entrer chez lui avant la délivrance des deniers, et le parfait accord du moment indiqué par l'Agent de Madame pour l'Audience, avec celui où Monsieur l'accorda, donnent beaucoup de poids à ma conjecture. Si j'ajoutois: Celui qui reçoit de la main droite, étant à bon droit soupçonné de n'avoir pas la main gauche plus pure, *il est très-probable* qu'après qu'on a eu touché mes cent quinze louis de le-Jay, l'enchere s'est trouvé couverte par un autre; d'où sans doute est venue l'impossibilité d'obtenir une seconde Audience, malgré les promesses du mari et de la femme; d'où est partie l'offre tardive de rendre l'argent à celui qui avoit le moins donné; parce qu'en pareille affaire on ne peut tout garder sans qu'un des deux payans ne jette les hauts cris' (p.25). Beaumarchais leaves it at that, but the words cannot fail to raise suspicions in the mind of the reader. Goezman's real role in the affair still remains somewhat obscure, but what the author has just said hangs in the background of our thought, like a hypothesis which will be supported more and more by what we learn of Goezman's character. There is, for example, his obvious inhumanity: 'Et croyez-vous qu'on ignorât mon empressement, lorsqu'à une de ces courses nous vîmes de mon carosse M. Goezman ouvrir le rideau de son cabinet au premier, qui donne sur le Quai, et regarder à travers les vitres le malheureux qui restoit à sa porte?' (p.4). His dishonesty is seen in the conversation which he had with La Châtaignerie, during which he blamed Beaumarchais for writing only figures on his statement of accounts composed with Pâris-Duverney, whereas the figures were repeated in words on the other side of the sheet, a fact which he left La Châtaignerie to find out for himself. His cynicism is seen in the remark he made after the *parlement* had pronounced in favour of La Blache: 'M. Goezman, en sortant du Conseil, dit tout haut à mon Avocat, devant

plusieurs personnes, *qu'on avoit opiné du bonnet d'après son avis*' (p.10).

Goezman, however, is not in the centre of the picture yet, and will be seen at closer quarters, as it were, when Beaumarchais comes to answer his memoranda. Mme Goezman, however, is depicted as being a much more colourful character, and this right from the beginning. She appears of course hard and egoistic in her intention to retain the 15 louis and in her attempts to frighten Lejay. But this merely represents her culpability in the eyes of the law, and is not that part of the picture which interests us here. To these somewhat abstract considerations Beaumarchais adds the portrait of mme Goezman's moral essence, as it were, which is artistically attractive. Thus we take pleasure in her sly, plausible approach to the bookseller, and her crafty suggestions for making money out of her position. Dairolles is quoted as saying that 'le vrai motif qui engage le sieur le-Jay à répondre des audiences est que Madame Goezman l'a plusieurs fois assuré, que, s'il se présentoit un Client généreux, dont la cause fût juste, et qui ne demandât que des choses honnêtes, elle ne croiroit pas offenser sa délicatesse en recevant un présent' (p.5). Then, in a note, Beaumarchais brings the picture into clearer focus by quoting Madame Goezman's actual words, which are much more piquant: '*quand son mari seroit Rapporteur, elle sauroit bien plumer la poule sans la faire crier*' (p.5). The lady is, of course, to be condemned, but already in the first *mémoire* she is beginning to assume for the reader an interest which is independent of her role in the case. She has an artistic autonomy.

The *Supplément* is from our present point of view the more rewarding of the two works we are considering. Having laid down the main lines of his defence, Beaumarchais can now fill it out with detail and let his pen flow much more freely. It is at this point that one can use the official papers to check the substance and to note the form of what Beaumarchais says. A large section of the *Supplément* is concerned with the *interrogatoires* and *confrontations*. The most interesting are the meetings between

Beaumarchais and mme Goezman, but it is to be noted that they are prepared, dramatically, by several others of less importance in themselves. In these mme Goezman gives her minor opponents a sample of her behaviour and her character. Beaumarchais devotes the whole of the first part thus to mme Goezman, and introduces the comedy with a short discussion of her character, as he does about the people in his plays, in the prefatory notes. 'Avant d'entamer les confrontations de Madame Goezman avec moi', he writes, 'il est bon de dire un mot de son plan de défense, le meilleur de tous, s'il étoit aussi sûr qu'il est commode.

'A mesure qu'il se présentoit un témoin, Madame Goezman commençoit par le reprocher, le récuser, l'injurier avant même qu'il eût parlé; puis le laissoit dire' (*Supplément*, p.4).

This description agrees completely with the official record. For example, when mme Goezman meets Santerre, the document reads: 'Madame Goezman a dit qu'elle reproche le témoin parce qu'il accompagnait le sieur Beaumarchais et que par cette raison il lui est suspect. Par le témoin a été dit n'avoir rien à répondre à un pareil reproche'.[11] Again, when confronted with Falconnet: 'L'accusée a dit pour reproches contre le témoin qu'elle le reproche parce qu'il a accompagné le sieur de Beaumarchais et que par cette raison il lui est suspect'.[12] Also with mme Lejay: 'Madame Goezman a dit qu'elle reproche le témoin comme la femme d'un homme qui est devenu son ennemi par rapport à la dénonciation de Monsieur Goezman'.[13] In the cases of Santerre and of Falconnet the confrontation is reduced, in the *Supplément*, to one paragraph respectively, ending with a generalization and an anticipation of things to come: 'C'étoit un parti pris; il fut récusé comme les autres: enfin tout autant qu'il s'en présenta se virent reprochés, récusés, injuriés sans pitié: chacun disoit en sortant,

[11] Archives nationales, Carton X_2 1338, *confrontation* of 8 September 1773.

[12] *ibid.*, same day, *confrontation* with Falconnet.

[13] *ibid.*, *confrontation* with madame Lejay.

quelle femme! je plains Beaumarchais; s'il n'est que soufflеté dans sa confrontation, il pourra se vanter d'en être quitte à bon marché' (*Supplément*, p.5).

The opportunity for comedy is greater when mme Goezman is confronted with a hostile female witness. The situation is a classic one, and Beaumarchais probably exploits it for its own sake: 'Un seul témoin parut redoutable à Madame Goezman; autant elle avoit été fiére avec tous les hommes, autant elle fut modeste avec la Dame le-Jay; soit qu'elle comptât moins sur les égards d'une personne de son sexe, ou que leur ancienne liaison lui donnât quelque inquiétude' (p.5). Mme Goezman is by now developing a more convincing complexity of character. Each *réplique* adds a little more sparkle to the portrait. After some remarks based on hearsay, we come to the confrontation itself. An interesting parallel can be quoted at this point between the official document and Beaumarchais. The two passages are close enough to establish the good faith of the author, while at the same time revealing how Beaumarchais has added just the right piquancy to make all the difference. The record states baldly: 'Nous a supplié d'interpeller la témoin de déclarer si elle n'a jamais été dans l'appartement du mari de la témoin pour y avoir aucune conversation particulière qui ne fût très honnête et qui pût compromettre son état et celui d'une femme honnête'.[13] Beaumarchais writes: '*Dites, je vous prie, Madame, si j'ai jamais monté seule avec M. le-Jay dans sa chambre, et si j'y suis restée enfermée avec lui de maniére à donner à rire et faire jaser sur mon compte?*—En mon Dieu, Madame, vous m'étonnez beaucoup avec vos étranges questions! tout ce que vous demandez a-t-il aucun rapport à l'affaire qui nous rassemble! Il s'agit de cent louis que vous avez reçus, de 15 louis que vous avez dans vos mains; et non de vos têtes-à-têtes avec mon mari, dont personne ne se plaint' (*Supplément*, p.6). In fact the record reduces mme Lejay's reply to 'la témoin a dit qu'elle reconnaît Madame Goezman pour une femme honnête et de probité jusqu'au moment de l'affaire présente'.[13]

It is, however, the confrontations with Beaumarchais which give us the most arresting picture of Goezman's wife. Here the official document begins: 'Après serment par eux respectivement faits en présence l'un de l'autre de dire vérité et interpellé de déclarer s'ils se connaissent, ont dit ne se pas connaître'.[14] Of this unpromising material Beaumarchais makes: 'Après les sermens reçus et les préambules ordinaires sur nos noms et qualités, on nous demanda si nous nous connoissions. *Pour cela non*, dit Mde. Goezman, *je ne connois ni ne veux jamais le connoître*. Et l'on écrivit' (p.7). We shall never know exactly what the lady's remarks were, but we do know that Beaumarchais manages to work in a little compliment at this point which, if it was ever made, the clerk of the court chose to ignore: 'Je n'ai pas l'honneur non plus de connoître Madame; mais en la voyant je ne puis m'empêcher de former un vœu tout différent du sien'. *Et l'on écrivit* (p.7).

The next section of dialogue runs as follows: 'Madame Goezman sommée ensuite d'articuler ses reproches, si elle en avoit à fournir contre moi, répondit: *Ecrivez que je reproche et récuse Monsieur, parce qu'il est mon ennemi capital, et parce qu'il a une ame atroce connue pour telle dans tout Paris, etc.*' (p.7). But looking at the report, we see that mme Goezman had added something to the effect that Beaumarchais had 'cherché à employer toutes les menaces et les promesses et ce pour satisfaire sa vengeance'. We also find these words echoed in the first draft[15] of Beaumarchais's version. It would seem, then, that they were omitted deliberately at a later stage. They are not indispensable, and their omission makes it possible for the author to end the sentence with more pungency, leaving the reader with the comic image of the dramatist's *ame atroce*.

There follows a little sketch of the lady, enlivened by one or two comic reflexions which help to give precision to the picture,

[14] *ibid.*, *confrontation* of 10 September 1773.

[15] in the family archives.

but which are unfortunately unverifiable: 'Je trouvai la phrase un peu masculine pour une Dame; mais en la voyant s'affermir sur son siége, sortir d'elle-même, enfler sa voix pour me dire ces premiéres injures, je jugeai qu'elle avoit senti le besoin de commencer l'attaque par une période vigoureuse pour se mettre en force; et je ne lui en sus pas mauvais gré' (p.7). His reply follows almost immediately: 'Je n'ai aucun reproche à faire à Madame, pas même sur la petite humeur qui la domine en ce moment; mais bien des regrets à lui montrer de ne devoir qu'à un procès criminel l'occasion de lui offrir mes premiers hommages. Quant à l'atrocité de mon ame, j'espére lui prouver par la modération de mes réponses, et par ma conduite respectueuses, que son conseil l'a mal informée sur mon compte' (p.7). *Et l'on écrivit.* Beaumarchais has, in his final version, broken this last sentence off after the word *compte*. The original sentence continues thus: 'et quant aux menaces et promesses qu'elle lui fait pour inculper d'autres personnes qu'elle ne nomme point, il espére qu'elle voudra bien s'expliquer mieux pour qu'il puisse avoir l'avantage de lui répondre'.[14] Once more, the force of the sentence gains from the cut after *sur mon compte*.

Meanwhile let us note the impression we have from the above considerations, that the official record is reasonably complete. This will be of interest when we find something in Beaumarchais which is not in the record, for then it is probable that the author has either added something, or been struck by something which was significant to him, while being unworthy of mention from the point of view of the clerk or the judge. Beaumarchais was not writing entirely from memory, since he made notes on what was read out to him, and on what he heard. An addition seems to have been made a little further on. After the clerk has read out Beaumarchais's replies as recorded in his *interrogations et récollements*, he asks whether Madame has any observations to make. 'Ma foi non, Monsieur (répond-elle en souriant au Magistrat); que voulez-vous que je dise à tout ce fatras de bêtises? Il faut que Monsieur ait bien du tems à perdre pour avoir fait écrire

autant de platitudes'. This seems to have been inserted in order to provide an opening for the witticism which follows: 'Je ne fus pas fâché de la voir un peu adoucie sur mon compte; car enfin des bêtises ne sont pas des atrocités' (p.7).

The *réplique* which follows this has a rather involved history. In the printed version it reads: 'Faites vos interpellations, Madame', lui dit le Conseiller-Commissaire. 'Je suis obligé de vous prévenir qu'après ce moment il ne sera plus tems.' — *Eh mais sur quoi, Monsieur? je ne vois pas moi . . . Ah! . . . écrivez qu'en général toutes les réponses de Monsieur sont fausses et suggérées*' (p.7). Madame Goezman is here cast in the role of *ingénue*, reciting awkwardly a lesson she does not understand. In the record we find this phrase again: 'par Madame Goezman a été dit que toutes les réponses du Sieur Beaumarchais sont suggérées'. It does not stop there, however, but is followed by a long passage, all forming part of the same answer, and which takes us some lines further on in the printed text, to the words 'soi-disante audience'. This passage has been cut out of the memorandum. It refers to the letter which Beaumarchais sent to mme Goezman after the judgement of the *parlement*, led by her husband, had gone against the author, and was concerned essentially with the question of the 15 louis. Oddly enough, this has been transferred to the next section of this memorandum, i.e. to that part entitled *Confrontation de Madame Goezman à moi*, so that to find it we have to jump from page 8 to page 17 of the original edition. The explanation would seem to be that, in the *Confrontation de moi à madame Goezman*, Beaumarchais was mainly concerned with depicting mme Goezman's light-headedness, and so for reasons of clarity, as well as for the sake of the dramatic quality of the dialogue, has postponed any discussion of the famous 15 louis until the later section. In any case the paragraph which leads up to the words 'soi-disante audience' has no counterpart in the record. It runs: 'Je souriois. Elle voulut en savoir la raison: C'est, Madame, qu'à votre exclamation, j'ai bien jugé que vous vous rappelliez subitement cette partie de votre leçon, mais vous auriez pu l'appliquer

plus heureusement. Sur une foule d'objets qui vous sont étrangers dans mes interrogatoires, vous ne pouvez savoir si mes réponses sont *fausses* ou vraies. A l'égard de la *suggestion*, vous avez certainement confondu; parce qu'étant regardé par votre conseil, comme le Chef *d'une Clique* (pour user de vos termes), on vous aura dit que je suggérois les réponses aux autres, et non que les miennes m'étoient *suggérées*. Mais n'auriez-vous rien à dire de particulier sur la lettre que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous écrire, et qui m'a procuré l'audience de M. Goezman? . . . *Certainement, Monsieur . . . attendez . . . écrivez . . . quant à l'égard de la soi-disante audience . . . de la soi-disante . . . audience*' (p.8). In the official record the rest of the paragraph is taken up with a long wrangle about this same letter, which Beaumarchais chose not to dwell on in the scene before us.

A few lines further on we have the famous dialogue about the *laquais blondin:* mme Goezman defies Beaumarchais to prove that he handed a letter to her lackey asking for an audience with her husband, and she does this by challenging him to describe her lackey. He says it was a 'laquais blondin', to which she triumphantly replies, in the memorandum: 'Ecrivez que Monsieur a remis la lettre à un blondin; mon laquais n'est pas blond, mais châtain-clair. (Je fus atterré de cette réplique;) . . .' (p.9). This with the comically subtle distinction between *blond* and *châtain-clair*, and the ridiculous pride which mme Goezman then goes on to show in the fact that she has two liveries, one for summer and one for winter, forms a high point of this scene, and beautifully rounds off the lady's performance. We are therefore a little disappointed to learn that the conversation did not apparently take place until later on the same day, at the confrontation of *Madame à Monsieur*. It has been transposed for what one can only call aesthetic reasons. Moreover, madame was not *quite* so foolish as the author makes her out to be, since she went only as far as to say that her lackey was . . . *châtain*!

The second confrontation, that in which mme Goezman has to answer questions put to her by Beaumarchais, sets the seal of

perfection on the portrait of the *conseiller*'s wife. Once more we have to distinguish between the purely legal aspect of the memorandum, and the literary skill which brings it to life. Four main points are discussed: the contradictions between the statements made by mme Goezman in her first and second interrogations on the one hand, and her *récollement* on the other; the identity of the lackey who allegedly was sent by madame to Lejay's three times to ask him to take back the presents he has surreptitiously left at her house; the role of the 15 louis; and the further contradictions mme Goezman had made about Beaumarchais's letter to her asking for the return of the said louis.

Mme Goezman's feminine qualities are ironically praised from the beginning, when Beaumarchais tells her that she is 'une femme très-aimable'. The author will exploit her feminity to enhance the light-headedness he wishes to depict. A little further on, when the lady has excused herself for not telling the truth at her second interrogation, on the ground that she was *dans un état critique*, and is naturally feeling somewhat embarrassed, Beaumarchais dwells upon the incident with apparent relish: 'Pour l'honneur de la vérité, il faut avouer qu'en parlant ainsi, l'éclair des yeux ne brilloit plus, la phisionomie étoit modeste, le ton doux, plus de jactance, plus d'injures: pour le coup je reconnus le langage aimable d'une jeune femme' (p.14). It will be noticed that, for obvious reasons of propriety, Beaumarchais gives the reader a sentimental rather than a physical portrait of the lady. References to her appearance are faint and tactful, and are subordinated to the image of her character, which is presented with skilful ambiguity. For mme Goezman must appear not only as wicked and scheming, but also as the victim of her husband, in so far as he manipulates her defence from the wings. Two contradictory reactions towards her have therefore to be evoked: repulsion and pity. Beaumarchais interposes between the close of the evening session and the reopening of the confrontation the following morning, a series of reflexions which serve as connecting tissue, help to give the illusion of passing time, and also give him the

opportunity to create the required atmosphere: 'Eh! quel homme assez dur se défendroit de la douce compassion qu'inspire un trop foible ennemi, poussé dans l'arêne par la cruauté de ceux qui n'ont pas le courage de s'y présenter eux-mêmes! Qui peut voir sans s'adoucir une jeune femme jettée entre des hommes, et forcée par l'acharnement des uns de se mettre aux prises avec la fermeté des autres; s'égarer dans ses fuites; s'embarrasser dans ses réponses, sentir qu'elle en rougit, et rougir encore plus de dépit de ne pouvoir s'en empêcher.

Ces Greffes, ces confrontations, tous ces débats virils ne sont point faits pour les femmes: on sent qu'elles y sont déplacées; le terrain anguleux et dur de la chicane blesse leurs pieds délicats: appuyés sur la vérité même, elles auroient peine à s'y porter: jugez quand on les force à y soutenir le mensonge! Aussi malheur à qui les y poussa. Celui qui s'appuie sur un foible roseau, ne doit pas s'étonner qu'il se brise et lui perce la main' (p.11).

Mme Goezman's replies to Beaumarchais's questions are in themselves the most impressive indications of her inability to cope with the situation. Here again it is useful to compare the theatrical brilliance of the *répliques* which the author puts into her mouth, with the colourless reports which we read in the dossier of the affair. To be just, however, we must say that Beaumarchais himself admits that there may be some deviations in what he writes from the dialogue as it actually took place. In a note he adds: 'Toutes ces citations sont des efforts de mémoire, et le fruit des Notes que j'ai faites en sortant de chaque confrontation où toutes les piéces m'ont passé sous les yeux. Peut-être y a-t-il quelques légéres différences entre les paroles; mais je certifie que le sens y est conservé avec la plus grande fidélité' (p.17). One need not dispute this assertion, but the fact remains that where alterations do occur, they are of much more interest than those found in the memoranda of Beaumarchais's opponents, and show the sure instinct of the dramatist at work. Enough has been said to indicate the type of approach to the confrontations with mme Goezman which we find in the *Supplément*. Only a critical edition

could do justice to all the details of composition which would be revealed by a full comparison between the printed text of Beaumarchais and the records of the Archives nationales.

The *seconde partie* is devoted to Goezman, and is written in a different vein, for here the enemy is powerful, cunning and merciless. Beaumarchais certainly never seems to lose his self-confidence, but he is not given, in this section, to such bursts of gaiety. Beneath the buffoonery of the first part there always lay a serious intention, born of the real gravity of the situation itself. This now comes in for its proper treatment. But the enemy in this case was not merely a man who happened to wield power, he was also the representative of public justice, a judge. However impertinent he could be, Beaumarchais was never inclined to any form of anarchy, so that beneath all the jibes there is a deep respect for the institutions of law as such. It is essential for him therefore, not only for the obvious reasons of the debater, but also to satisfy himself, that he should separate the judge from the man, in order that he may have the right to discuss Goezman at all. Thus, though Beaumarchais's firmness is never relaxed, circonspection remains the keynote: 'Qu'on ne me taxe donc de vengeance ni de haine, si je me vois forcé de scruter M. Goezman: la nécessité d'une défense légitime, et sa qualité d'accusateur me donnent le droit d'éclairer sa conduite. Je n'accuse point, je me défens, et j'examine. Que si mon inquisition venoit à verser quelque défaveur sur ce Magistrat, il ne faudroit pas me l'imputer: ce seroit un mal pour lui, non un tort à moi, la faute des événemens et non la mienne. Pourquoi descend-il de la tribune, et vient-il se mêler dans l'arêne aux athlètes qui combattent? lui! que son bonheur avoit élevé jusqu'au rang de ceux qui jugent des coups qu'ils se portent!' (p.23).

The whole case is based, argues Beaumarchais, on two *déclarations extrajudiciaires*, those of Lejay. The author recapitulates the circumstances in which these were made, and then devotes the rest of this part to the close examination of the copies of these declarations before the court, arguing from the spelling and the

corrections that they were both made originally by Goezman and dictated to Lejay. The discussion cannot but remind us of Figaro's involvement with Marceline in the *Mariage*. However, the steps in this argument are not relevant to my present purpose, which is not to demonstrate the evident soundness of Beaumarchais's position, but rather to observe the tone and attitude of the author to his opponents and to his readers. I have argued above that the very success of these *mémoires* as literature stems largely from the fact that they were not primarily written as literature, and that it was the author's desperate involvement in the content of what he was saying that gave him the power to write as he did. This point is made quite clear in this part of the *Supplément* when Beaumarchais suddenly cries out in irritation at those who tax him with the desire to shine merely: 'Eh! Monsieur, à quoi vous arrêtez-vous? Un mémoire au criminel se juge-t-il sur les principes d'un discours académique? A la parade on regarde au vain éclat des armes; on les prise au combat sur la bonté de leur trempe. Accordez-moi les choses, et j'abandonne les phrases. Il s'agit pour moi de vaincre, non de briller; ou plutôt, Monsieur, il me suffit de n'être pas vaincu' (p.28).

Such clarity and firmness of purpose is not however to be taken for arrogance on the part of the author, who on several occasions makes a point of confessing his own inability to see his imperfections, and asking for indulgence from those who know him better than perhaps he knows himself. The note here is surely one of sincerity: 'L'œil qui voit tout ne se voit pas lui-même, et je suis trop près de moi pour être frappé de mes défauts; mais prenez garde aussi de vous placer trop loin pour les bien juger' (p.28). And again, further on: 'Peut-être un juste ressentiment augmentant ma fierté naturelle, ai-je été dur et tranchant dans la dispute, quand je croyois n'être que nerveux et concis. En société, quand je pensois être libre et disert, peut-être avoit-on droit de me croire avantageux. Tout ce qu'il vous plaira, Messieurs; mais si j'étois un fat, s'ensuit-il que j'étois un Ogre? Et quand je me serois enrubanné de la tête aux pieds; quand je me serois affublé, bardé

de tous les ridicules ensemble, faut-il pour cela me supposer la voracité d'un Vampire? Eh! mes chers Ennemis, vous entendez mal votre affaire; passez-moi ce léger avis: si vous voulez me nuire absolument, faites au moins qu'on puisse vous croire' (p.42). But never does this openness to criticism cause Beaumarchais to lose his supreme self-confidence, and when he wishes to portray himself as he truly thinks he is, it is always a certain inner strength which he singles out as forming, as far as he can see, the very essence of his nature: 'Et vous qui m'avez connu, vous qui m'avez suivi sans cesse; O mes amis! Dites si vous avez jamais vu autre chose en moi qu'un homme constamment gai; aimant avec une égale passion l'étude et le plaisir; enclin à la raillerie, mais sans amertume, et l'accueillant dans autrui contre soi quand elle est assaisonnée; soutenant peut-être avec trop d'ardeur son opinion quand il la croit juste, mais honorant hautement et sans envie tous les gens qu'il reconnoît supérieurs; confiant sur ses intérêts jusqu'à la négligence; actif quand il est éguillonné; paresseux et stagnant après l'orage; insouciant dans le bonheur, mais poussant la constance et la sérénité dans l'infortune jusqu'à l'étonnement de ses plus familiers amis' (p.41).

Thus we can see that, in spite of the meticulous examination of facts, and the careful definition of his position, Beaumarchais himself comes into the foreground of the picture, in this part of the *Supplément*, as in the first part. But whereas it was a gay, self-assertive character who confronted mme Goezman, it is now the persecuted and stoical defender of his dignity and liberty who stands before her husband. This is the part in which the dreadful reality of the situation is faced and emotionally appreciated. It is the time for truth, about the author himself as well as the others. Biographers have often pointed out how Beaumarchais floored his enemies in the *Mémoires*, but it should be remembered that he was not concerned with leaving in the mind of the reader a *brilliant* victory merely. He was interested in moving the reader to compassion at the spectacle of injustice—and in winning his case. To imagine that he wrote the *Mémoires* with one eye on literary

glory is surely to misunderstand the nature of the danger which faced him. Written with the urgency of desperation, these memoranda are good artistically only because they do not aim at being that, but rather at being effective in the real context in which they were written. The distinction here is an easy one to draw, though in the realm of art itself one is faced with nuances which it is often much more difficult to assess. The *Mémoires* are interesting as a limiting case of an author 'having something to say', of the form springing from preoccupation with content. 'Art' here is a by-product of a living act of self-defence. But what I have called a by-product exists for the outsider only. For the author of the *Mémoires*, surely, there is no literature, but only successful language.

The Fortunes of Bolingbroke in France in the eighteenth century

by D. J. Fletcher

The decline of Bolingbroke's reputation in France after his death is, in many ways, no more than the story of Voltaire's disenchantment with the English writer writ large. The history of the relations between the two men has certainly not been neglected by scholars, but a new emphasis upon certain of its key-phases will throw some light upon the question of Bolingbroke's fortunes across the channel in the eighteenth century.

A letter which Voltaire wrote to mme Du Deffand in 1760 contains the following succinct but sweeping comment upon the English: 'Il y en a bien peu qui ressemblent à Bolingbroke; celui là valait mieux que ses livres, mais pour les autres anglais leurs livres valent mieux qu'eux' (Best.8028). This judgement reveals at once the common factor in the waning of Voltaire's admiration for his erstwhile friend and in the steady dwindling of Bolingbroke's posthumous popularity in France. Once the truly spell-binding power of the man had vanished, the work he left behind him lost its appeal. The quicksilver brilliance of his personality which had become legendary in his own lifetime was soon forgotten as the leaden bulk of his *Philosophical works*, published in 1754, three years after his death, weighted the scales against him. The reputation of virtuosity and versatility which he had built up during a chequered career did not avert for long the inevitable adverse judgements. The *Bibliothèque des sciences et des beaux-arts* was

already attempting, in 1755, to assess Bolingbroke's brilliance at its true worth: 'Le nom et la réputation de ce Lord peuvent en imposer mais l'éblouissement ne saurait être de durée. De loin, c'est un astre qui jette quelque éclat; de près, ce n'est qu'un météore passager' (iv.117-118). Grimm had delivered a similar judgement the previous year: 'Son nom a pu faire passer ses ouvrages dans ce siècle, mais ses ouvrages ne feront sûrement pas passer son nom à la postérité'.[1]

Voltaire's voice was added, after 1754, to the general chorus of disapproval of Bolingbroke's works and his astringent comments have led so notable a Voltaire scholar as professor Torrey to conclude that the oft-alleged influence of Bolingbroke upon Voltaire is exaggerated, if not entirely fictitious.[2] It is true, as professor Torrey points out, that Voltaire, in *Candide*, refutes the sort of smug optimism which characterises Bolingbroke's *Philosophical works*. That the ' "master and pupil" evidently despised each other as philosophers' can only be advanced, however, if the chronological factor is left out of account. If those opinions of Bolingbroke, which he had already formulated by about 1720 and which are contained in the *Substance of some Letters to m. de Pouilly*, written at that time, are compared not with the thought of the mature Voltaire but with the ideas expressed in a work like the earlier *Le Pour et le contre*, a definite intellectual kinship can be discerned. However rebarbative Voltaire found Bolingbroke as a writer, there is every indication that he succumbed easily to the lure of one of the most captivating talkers of the century, and that the strong hold which the eloquent Bolingbroke took upon his imagination, when he was a young man, was never completely released, despite the disillusioning power of the printed page.

[1] *Correspondance littéraire* (éd. M. Tourneux, Paris 1877), p.152.

[2] *Voltaire and the English deists* (1930), p.135. Commenting, in a footnote, upon his earlier article 'Bolingbroke and Voltaire: a fictitious influence', *Publications of the Modern language association of America* (September 1927), xlii, the author declares: 'I have come to believe that "exaggerated" is the better adjective, although the exaggerations are largely based on fictions'.

It is worth recalling for a moment one or two contemporary testimonies to the personal magnetism and charm of Bolingbroke. Chesterfield recognised in the noble lord a kindred spirit, born to impress and sway; this view was conveyed to readers of a French edition of his letters to his son which appeared in 1775: 'Il avait une figure séduisante; il avait dans son air et dans ses manières toutes les grâces imaginables: il possédait toute la noblesse de la bonne éducation, à laquelle un homme de qualité puisse prétendre et que l'on trouve néanmoins en si peu de personnes parmi nous' (ii.297). Such social graces only served to enhance more solid gifts: 'un fonds prodigieux de presque toutes les sortes de connaissances, la conception la plus vive, la plus claire et la plus heureuse mémoire, dont jamais homme a été favorisé' (ii.296). This portrait is little different from that offered, in 1754, to readers of the *discours préliminaire* to the *Mémoires secrets*: 'Sa figure était agréable, sa physionomie intéressante, son air noble, ses manières engageantes, sa vivacité singulière et sa manière prodigieuse' (p.xiii).[3] It must have been difficult indeed to resist the compelling flow of ideas, invested with an almost oracular quality by the peculiar magic of Bolingbroke's smooth delivery: 'Son éloquence n'était pas un de ces torrents peu profonds qui, souvent arrêtés dans leur cours incertain ne s'élancent que par cascades: elle coulait égale, abondante et rapide comme un fleuve majestueux qui répand les richesses et la fertilité' (pp.xv-xvi).

Voltaire was immediately won over, as can be seen from the excited account of his first meeting with Bolingbroke which he sent to Thieriot on 4 December 1722: 'J'ai trouvé dans cet illustre anglois tout l'érudition de son pays, et toutte la politesse du nôtre. Je n'ai jamais entendu parler notre langue avec plus d'énergie et de justesse. Cet homme qui a été toutte sa vie plongé

[3] the *discours* is based very closely upon an English pamphlet *Memoirs of the life and ministerial conduct, with some free remarks on the political writings of the late lord viscount Bolingbroke*. The title *Mémoires secrets de mylord Bolingbroke* was given to the *Letter to sir William Windham* by the translator J. L. Favier.

dans les plaisirs et dans les afaires a trouvé pourtant le moyen de tout aprendre et de tout retenir. Il sçait l'histoire des anciens égiptiens comme celle de l'Angleterre, il possède Virgile comme Milton, il aime la poésie angloise, la françoise, et l'italienne mais il les aime différemment parcequ'il discerne parfaittement leurs différens génies' (Best.133). Time may have blurred, but it could never efface this first vivid impression of the man whom he described, when dedicating his tragedy *Brutus* to him in 1731, as 'un des plus brillants génies et l'homme le plus éloquent de son siècle'.

Voltaire's disappointment at Bolingbroke's literary shortcomings is usually tempered by a desire to do justice to the memory of a figure who had unquestionably exerted a formative influence on his life. Though quite open in his condemnation of an author he found repetitious, long-winded, unmethodical and down-right boring, he does not gloat over this discovery of his former idol's feet of clay. He feels regret, rather, that the image he preserves in his own memory in all its pristine brilliance will not be sustained in the public mind by the appearance in 1754 of such a dreary work as the French translation of Bolingbroke's *Letter to sir William Windham*. 'On a rendu un mauvais service à sa mémoire d'imprimer cette rapsodie' he writes to Argental (Best.5149). It is noticeable that whatever irritation he feels at Bolingbroke's formal deficiencies as a writer, Voltaire is at pains to give him credit for the boldness and soundness of his ideas. This is apparent in the letter which he wrote to mme Du Deffand in 1759: 'Je voudrais que quelqu'un eût élagué en français les œuvres philosophiques de feu Mylord Bolingbroke, c'est un prolixe personnage, et sans aucune méthode; mais on en pourait faire un ouvrage bien terrible pour les préjugés, et bien utile pour la raison' (Best.7806). Bolingbroke's most important biographer, Sichel, would seem to be astray, therefore, when attributing to his subject 'a *literary* genius which has left an undying imprint upon Voltaire',[4] though a case can still be made

[4] *Bolingbroke and his times*, i.2.

out for Bolingbroke as Voltaire's *maître à penser* if we restrict this influence to a definite period in their relationship, when Voltaire, eager to begin his philosophical apprenticeship, was ready to sit at the feet of one his senior in years and clearly his superior in knowledge of men and ideas. The idea of a master-disciple relationship is suggested in a letter which Voltaire wrote to Argental in 1754 (Best.5129), where he mentions with approval the forthright tone of parts of Bolingbroke's *Letters on the use and study of history* and follows this with the remark: 'Les anglais paraissent faits pour nous apprendre à penser.'

The idea of Bolingbroke as a source of enlightenment is presented less obliquely in an entry in one of Voltaire's notebooks where he makes a comparison between him and his political ally, Pulteney: 'P. loves retirement and silence, virtuous and learned for himself. B more communicatif diffuses everiwhere his virtue and his knowledge. B[P] is a dark lanthorn; tho' it is illuminated within, it affords no manner of light or advantage to such, as stood by it. The other is an ordinary lamp, which consumes and wastes itself for the benefit of every passenger'.[5] Exactly to what extent Voltaire profited from Bolingbroke's expansiveness cannot be accurately gauged, but there seems little reason to doubt Margaret Libby's soberly phrased judgement that 'Bolingbroke's influence was important in his philosophical education'.[6]

The years 1723-1724 mark the halcyon phase of the Bolingbroke-Voltaire friendship. They saw each other frequently after their initial meeting at the end of the previous year, when Voltaire had impressed his hosts at La Source as a young poet of the greatest promise, concrete evidences of which could be appreciated from the parts of *La Henriade* which he read aloud to them. Bolingbroke's interest in poetry was peripheral at the time, however; his central preoccupation was with the study of philosophy and history (and more especially chronology) which had

[5] *Voltaire's notebooks*, i.40.

[6] *The Attitude of Voltaire to magic and the sciences* (New York 1935), p.20.

been neglected during a busy political career. It would seem likely that Voltaire was drawn into some discussion of these studies which Bolingbroke energetically pursued either at La Source or at the little house he had at Ablon, near Paris. It was probably from this latter retreat that he wrote to mme de Bernières in May 1723: 'Je crois déja être ici à cent lieues de Paris. Milord Bolimbrok me fait oublier et Henri quatre et Marianne, et comédiens, et libraires' (Best.148). When the attainted Bolingbroke was allowed to return to England later in the year, Voltaire felt quite lost without him, as he tells Thieriot in June: 'Monsieur de Richelieu partit hier pour Forges et milord Bolimbroke pour l'Angleterre. Ainsi je ne sai plus que devenir dans Paris' (Best.151).

Bolingbroke was back in France in September, however, as eager as ever to continue the course of study he had set himself. He was stimulated in his search for truth by another French friend, Lévesque de Pouilly, who, he acknowledged, had first whetted his appetite for study and led him to 'abstract philosophical reasonings'.[7] The relationship between Bolingbroke, Pouilly and Voltaire is an interesting one. Bolingbroke regarded Pouilly as his 'confrère en philosophie' and the tone he uses to address him is one of respect, even deference. Voltaire, on the other hand, commands genuine admiration for his natural poetic gifts but in the intellectual sphere he is considered as a mere acolyte. The distinction Bolingbroke drew between his two friends is clear from this passage in a letter he wrote to Pope in February 1724: 'Tir'd [of] the Town, and with the hurry of a Marriage, I am at a little house on the banks of the Seine where I intend to see no body these seven or Eight days, except the company I have carry'd with me, which are my Judgment and my Imagination. My Judgment resides in the head of an excellent young Man whom I hope some time or other to bring you acquainted with, & my Imagination in that of Voltaire, who says

[7] the acknowledgement is made in the first paragraph of *The Substance of some letters, written originally in French, about the year 1720, to m. de Pouilly.*

that he will introduce himself to you, and that the Muses shall answer for him'. He goes on to say that he is reading *Mariamne*, to which he accords the highest praise, 'you will I believe find in it that Art which Racine put into the Conduct of his Pieces, and that delicacy which appears in his diction, with a Spirit of Poetry which he never had, and which flags often in the best of Corneilles Tragedy'.[8] When communicating with Voltaire he is more concerned with warning him about the dangers of an unfettered imagination and giving him avuncular advice about the need for developing his judgement: 'Votre imagination est une source intarissable des idées les plus belles et les plus variées. Tout le monde vous l'accorde, servez vous en pour inventer. Mais retenez la quand il s'agit de corriger vos ouvrages, ou de régler votre conduite. Ne souffrez pas qu'elle entre dans le département du jugement. Ills ne marchent pas bien ensemble. Montagne auroit dit peutêtre, ills ne sont pas du même pied. Il y a quelque chose de plus. La Nature donne l'imagination, elle ne donne que la puissance d'acquérir le jugement. L'une ne demande que de la nature, l'autre veut être formé. Et voilà ce qui est difficile à faire, si l'on ne commence de bonne heure. Chaque année il devient plus difficile, et après un certain nombre d'années il devient impossible de le porter à un certain degré de force, et à un certain point de précision. Il s'en faut beaucoup que vous ayez ce nombre d'années. Ne croyez pas pour cela que vous ayez du temps à perdre. La Nature vous a donné un grand fonds de bien. Dépêchez vous à le faire valoir' (Best.185).

Some idea of the orientation which Bolingbroke wished to impart to Voltaire's intellectual pursuits can be gained from the rest of this letter, written from La Source in June 1724. The *philosophe* in embryo is encouraged to persevere with his reading of Locke's *Essay on human understanding*, which is proving less rewarding than he had expected. Locke is sound, if unspectacular, Bolingbroke points out, whereas 'Des Cartes dans la physique

[8] *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn, ii.221-222.

et Mallebranche dans la Métaphysique ont étez plutost Poètes que Philosophes.' Cartesian physics is ridiculed and Newton and Huygens held up as more reliable guides. A letter which Bolingbroke wrote about the same time (June 1724) to his friend, the *abbé* Alary, provides a further illustration of the sort of intellectual activity which Voltaire's two friends hoped would stimulate him to become a philosopher-poet: 'Nous [he and Poully] lisons, nous méditons et nous parlons ensemble de ce que nous avons lu ou médité. La physique nous occupe un peu; mais c'est la physique qui est fondée sur des observations et sur des expériences, et qui est cultivée par la géométrie. La métaphysique même, mon cher abbé, prend une partie de notre temps; mais c'est la métaphysique qui est fondée sur des idées claires et déterminées'.[9]

The period of close friendship between Voltaire and Bolingbroke, though it did not last very long, was important since it created a climate of personal intimacy favourable to the growth of an intellectual influence. Bolingbroke's feelings towards Voltaire had cooled even before the latter's visit to England; he showed signs towards the end of 1725 of tiring of his equivocal conduct in the matter of the dedication of the *Henriade*. Before this happened, however, relations between the two had been at their most cordial. Bolingbroke's genuine concern over an attack of smallpox which Voltaire suffered in 1723 touched the poet's heart, and in the *Epître à m. Gervasi, médecin* this solicitude is acknowledged and sincere gratitude to 'cher Bolingbroke' is expressed in warm terms. Intellectual affinity strengthened the bond of friendship; Pope wrote to Bolingbroke in April 1724 approving Voltaire as 'one worthy from his rational temper of that share of Friendship & Intimacy with which you honour him' (*Correspondence*, ii.229). Though the links which bound the two weakened over the years and Voltaire, as far as is known, saw nothing

[9] *Lettres historiques, philosophiques et particulières de Henri St. John, Lord Bolingbroke*, éd. Grimoard (Paris 1808), iii.236.

of Bolingbroke during the period of the latter's retirement in France (1735-1743), there is no reason to doubt his continued high regard for the English lord and his French wife or his avowal (made to Thieriot in a letter of 26 May 1732 that he was 'attach'd to them for life' (Best.476). This attachment did nothing to impair the faculty of judgement which Bolingbroke had been anxious to develop in him and which, ironically, he exercised to devastating effect upon his former mentor's *Philosophical works*. The potency of Bolingbroke's personality remained strong enough in his memory to impel him to subject these works to an extremely close scrutiny, as can still be seen from those stickers and markers left between the pages of the volumes in his library studied by professor Torrey. However great his disappointment at the meagre reward he earned for his diligence he did not allow it to obliterate altogether the memory of the impact which Bolingbroke's physical presence had made upon him many years before. The quickening influence of the man as well as the dead hand of the writer are recalled in the remark Voltaire made to Sherlock towards the end of his life: 'his face was imposing and so was his voice; in his works there are many leaves and little fruit'.[10]

Voltaire's contemporaries could not have been greatly surprised at his undertaking the *Défense de milord Bolingbroke*. The intellectual affinities between the two writers were noted by the *Bibliothèque impartiale*'s reviewer, who detected an element of self-interest in the vindication by 'le docteur Goodnatur'd Well-wisher' of a fellow-deist. Though there is, in the *Défense*, a hint of the technique, later employed by Voltaire in the *Examen important de milord Bolingbroke*, of using Bolingbroke as a stalking-horse for the expression of his own opinions, the defendant's ideas are not yet treated merely as a *point de départ*. Bolingbroke's reputation would, in any case, as the reviewer pointed out, have been considerably enhanced by the efforts of his doughty, if not altogether disinterested, champion: 'Quoiqu'il en soit du motif

[10] quoted by Torrey, p.140.

qui peut l'avoir porté à rendre ce service à son héros, la cause de ce grand homme ne pouvait tomber dans de meilleures mains: "Pour chanter dignement de tels Achilles, il faut être un Homère".' Voltaire's *Défense* appeared to the reviewer as a mighty counter-blast to the carping criticisms of Bolingbroke's *Letters on the study and use of history* made by 'de pauvres petits journalistes, galopins au Parnasse, qui ont eu l'insolence de donner des coups de pié au lion mort' (1754, ix.279). The attacks on orthodox religion mounted in the *Letters*, which appeared in 1752 in a French translation by J. Barbeu Du Bourg, were minor affairs compared with the full-scale assault contained in the *Philosophical works* published two years later. The kicks of outraged critics rained thick and fast upon Bolingbroke, whose reputation now went into sharp decline. In a letter written to sir Horace Mann on 1 December 1754, Horace Walpole bitterly but accurately gauged the prime factor in the posthumous loss of prestige suffered by his family's arch-enemy: 'While he betrayed and abused every man who trusted him, or who had forgiven him or to whom he was obliged, he was a hero, a patriot and a philosopher, and the greatest genius of his age; the moment his Craftsmen against Moses and St. Paul etc. were published, we have discovered that he was the worst man and the worst writer in the world'.

If Bolingbroke had confined his attention to history and politics, his reputation as an author would not have suffered to the same extent. The remarks on methodology contained in the *Lettres sur l'histoire* were well received, even by the most orthodox critics. The *Journal de Trévoux*, for example, in its issue for the last quarter of 1752 has this to say (p.2415) of the passage in which Bolingbroke develops these views: 'C'est une multitude d'observations très-utiles et bien exprimées; plusieurs étaient déjà fort connues mais la façon de les présenter n'est ici ni triviale ni ennuyeuse'. The last two chapters of the work, in which Bolingbroke presented a brief history of Europe from 1659 to 1713, elicited unreserved praise from all quarters. The verdict of

the *Bibliothèque raisonnée* was highly favourable: 'Ce seigneur a été un des plus habiles et des plus ingénieux écrivains de son siècle. On voit ici qu'il possédait à fond l'histoire ancienne et moderne. Il n'y a rien de plus achevé que le tableau qu'il trace des affaires de l'Europe depuis la paix des Pyrénées jusqu'au traité d'Utrecht' (juillet-décembre 1752, p.235). Pierre Clément, the editor of *Les Cinq années littéraires*, was equally lavish in his praise: 'Je regarde cette partie où il a quelque intérêt personnel comme le morceau d'éloquence le plus délié, le mieux suivi, le plus fort et le plus sublime que nous ayons' (1755, ii.258). The comparison with Voltaire's treatment of the same period in his *Siècle de Louis XIV* was bound to suggest itself; dr Maty recalls in the *Journal britannique* the personal friendship and intellectual affinity between the two historians, and goes on to note what in his view distinguishes the work of the one from that of the other: 'J'ai eu la curiosité de comparer ces lettres avec l'histoire de Mr. de Voltaire, et j'y ai trouvé tout l'accord qu'on devait se promettre de deux grands hommes, longtemps amis, et accoutumés à envisager certains objets de la même manière. Il y a cependant plus de descriptions dans l'un et de réflexions dans l'autre; celui-ci paraît avoir fait la principale étude des hommes, celui-là des états; le poète raconte les événements qui lui ont été rapportés, en historien éclairé et aussi impartial que le peut être un Français; l'Anglais est un philosophe profond, un politique adroit, un orateur véhément, qui démêle l'origine, l'enchaînure, les suites des révolutions, 'quorum pars magna fuit', et qui ne se montre pas moins animé du désir de se justifier que de celui de s'instruire' (janvier-février 1753, p.38).

Up to 1752 Bolingbroke's reputation in France as an acute historian of his own country's affairs and a vigorous exponent of the art of political polemics remained unshaken. It was based on translations of his contributions to the *Craftsman*, the opposition periodical which he edited. A collection of his articles, which had been published originally in the *Craftsman* from 1733 to 1734, and then in 1735 as a separate edition entitled *A Dissertation upon*

parties, came out in a French translation by Etienne de Silhouette in 1739. Another set of articles, the *Remarks upon the history of England by Humphrey Oldcastle*, which appeared in the pages of the *Craftsman* between 1730 and 1731, was published in a separate edition in 1743. The same year the readers of volumes xxi and xxii of the *Bibliothèque britannique* were able to form a reliable impression of the same work from a series of well-translated and copious extracts. Both the *Dissertation* and the *Remarks* are mentioned in volume xxxix (juillet-décembre 1747) of the *Bibliothèque raisonnée*, where the appearance of another work attributed to Bolingbroke, the *Collection of political tracts* prompts the following remark: 'La plume de Milord Bolingbroke est depuis longtemps regardée comme une des meilleures de l'Angleterre, et la finesse de ses réflexions a toujours fait admirer ses écrits même de ceux qui blâmaient ses principes'.

The *Craftsman's* regular weekly comments on the contemporary political situation in Britain were highly appreciated by a certain group of French readers, small but probably quite influential in building up Bolingbroke's reputation as a pundit on English political affairs. It is evident from the original copies and manuscript translations of the *Craftsman* conserved in the archives of the quai d'Orsay that in the highest French diplomatic circles Bolingbroke's name was one to conjure with. The magic aura surrounding Bolingbroke's personality can be seen from the correspondence between Chauvelin, the minister for foreign affairs, and the French ambassador in England, Chavigny. Despite the extremely tepid support of his superior, who, unexposed to Bolingbroke's charm, could cultivate a greater degree of critical detachment towards his ideas, Chavigny tended to regard the eloquent and experienced English lord as an oracle. 'Personne ne sçait plus que lui de tout, et n'en parle mieux', he tells Chauvelin in one letter.[11] In another letter, which he sent to him a few days later, it is Bolingbroke's grasp of international

[11] Correspondance politique: Angleterre, vol.377, f.35 (10 April 1732).

affairs which elicits his admiration: Bolingbroke 'est le seul dans son party capable de l'éclairer et de l'animer sur ce qui regarde le dehors. Il me semble que ses malheurs l'ont plus instruit qu'ils n'ont affoibli ses talents. Je voudrois pour luy et pour vous que son cœur fut formé à proportion de son esprit. Il est plus lumineux que jamais' (ff.51-52, 13 April). Chavigny's high opinion of Bolingbroke as an indispensable guide to the English political scene was shared by his successors. Bussy urged French diplomats not to neglect this valuable source of enlightenment,[12] and he himself translated the dedicatory letter to the *Dissertation upon parties*. Silhouette, who translated the whole work, had represented his government on diplomatic missions in England and had stayed with Bolingbroke, who, predictably, made a great impression upon him, as can be seen from this extract from a letter of 4 February 1734: 'J'ai été en général fort bien accueilli de toutes les personnes à qui j'ai été recommandé et particulièrement de Mylord et Mylady Boulinbrock. Je m'arrêtai, en allant à Oxford, à leur maison de campagne où je restai deux jours. Il y avait le chevalier de Windam, ami de Mylord. La conversation a roulé sur les belles-lettres, la politique, le commerce et les finances. Nous y avons lu le manuscrit de la nouvelle tragédie de M. Voltaire qui est bien rempli de négligences. Mylord est reconnu pour un des premiers génies de l'Europe'.[13]

It is probable that only certain professional diplomats and intellectuals interested enough in English affairs to procure original copies benefited regularly from the *Craftsman*'s weekly commentaries. The periodical became a by-word, however, among all students of English political life and there was probably a ready public in 1737 for *Le Crafts-man*, which appeared under the

[12] Mémoires et documents: Angleterre, vol.40, f.140.

[13] Correspondance politique: Angleterre, vol.383, f.215. Quoted by F. Baldensperger in his important article 'Voltaire anglophile avant son séjour d'Angleterre', *Revue de littérature comparée* (1929), ix, which, in its just distribution of emphasis, provides a reliable model, in our view, for subsequent interpretations of the relations between Bolingbroke and Voltaire.

imprint of Charles Le Cène, Amsterdam, and contained most of the articles which had appeared each week between June and December that year. The anonymous translator explains that he has retained the title of the periodical in the original: 'La réputation du *Crafts-man* est telle aujourd'hui que son nom seul est un éloge'. In 1749 appeared the best-known of Bolingbroke's series of articles for the *Craftsman*, and it was followed the year after by the French translation: *Lettres sur l'esprit de patriotisme, sur l'idée d'un roi patriote et sur l'état des partis qui divisaient l'Angleterre, lors de l'avènement de Georges Ier*. With the appearance of this work, Bolingbroke's reputation in France as a political writer can be said to have reached its peak. The *Bibliothèque raisonnée* came out strongly in its praise: 'On y voit de la noblesse dans les principes, de la grandeur d'âme dans les idées, du génie dans le tour, un stile nerveux et poli, on y remarque un politique profond, qui raisonne d'après sa propre expérience, qui connaît les caractères et la façon de penser des princes, les courtisans et les motifs qui les font agir. Enfin, on y découvre un savant de goût, qui assaisonne ses ouvrages de traits choisis de littérature et d'histoire ancienne et moderne, sans pédanterie et sans affectation' (octobre-décembre 1749, xliii.244). The attractiveness of Bolingbroke's personality, stressed in this review, is remarked upon also by Maty in the *Journal britannique*: 'Milord Bolingbroke, auteur de ces Lettres, a été plusieurs années à la tête des affaires. Il a eu le loisir de réfléchir dans sa retraite sur les objets qui l'occupaient auparavant. Egalement inaccessible à la crainte et à l'espérance, il avoue ses erreurs avec la même franchise avec laquelle il découvre celles des autres' (janvier-février 1750, i.57).

It would be difficult to identify the Bolingbroke to whom these virtues are attributed with the figure whose defects of character were to come in for such heavy criticism from French critics only a few years later. The discordant note struck by the *Journal de Trévoux* was to be sounded more frequently in future: 'L'auteur écrit noblement et fièrement; il pense au-dessus du commun des hommes; il manie la littérature ancienne comme il lui plaît; il

règne toutefois dans sa manière quelque chose de sombre, de chagrin, d'obscur' (octobre-décembre 1750, pp.2218 *et seq.*). What the reviewer found more disturbing about the work, however, was its basically subversive character and his general attitude is one of disapproval of 'une composition pernicieuse, contraire au repos des Etats et toute propre à souffler le feu de la discorde'. The admiration expressed two years later in the *Journal* for the author of the *Lettres sur l'histoire* is counter-balanced by the disquiet aroused by his religious scepticism: 'Milord Bolingbroke prend toute l'antiquité au criminel. Nous craignons même qu'il n'enveloppe dans la même classe le témoignage des Livres Saints' (octobre-décembre 1752, p.2415). Pierre Clément in his *Les cinq années littéraires* puts the matter more squarely; he was obviously startled by what he found in the work: 'les choses les plus hasardées et les plus dangereuses sur les fondements de la foi et les plus pures sources de la religion révélée' (1755, ii.258).

It was not Bolingbroke's outspoken opinions alone that caused his reputation to crumble; the collapse was precipitated by the striking contrast, which his critics did not fail to point out, between the boldness of his views and his pusillanimity in arranging for these opinions to be unleashed upon society by his publisher David Mallet only after he was dead and so immune from the social consequences of his action. Grimoard, the editor of a French edition of Bolingbroke's correspondence, basing his remarks upon a talk with Mallet's widow, states: 'Pope, Swift, Bolingbroke et ses amis, c'était une société de purs déistes', and adds that 'Swift en sa qualité de prêtre et de doyen de Saint-Patrice, était seulement un peu plus réservé que les autres, quoiqu'il pensât foncièrement de même' (i.185-186). The unalloyed deism imputed to Bolingbroke and his friends is probably based on recollections of discussions in which all three felt free to stray from the straight and narrow path of orthodoxy. There is an interesting exchange of letters between Bolingbroke and Swift, however, in which Bolingbroke, addressing his friend in his 'apostolical capacity,' attempts to convince him that his contact

with certain French intellectuals (his friendship with Boulainvilliers had probably disturbed the dean) had not made him stray so far from the path as to become an *esprit fort*. Bolingbroke classes himself among 'those, whom Reason, enlighten'd by Grace has made Believers', but distinguishes between the 'lofty & pompous structure' of revealed religion, inhabited by his friend, and the 'humble & plain building of Natural Religion' which he has made his spiritual home. The *esprit fort*, he explains, seeks to destroy both structures. 'I make no doubt', he concludes, 'but you are by this time abundantly convinc'd of my orthodoxy, & that you will name me no more in the same breath with Spinosa, whose System of one infinite substance I despise and abhor'.[14] Bolingbroke, throughout this letter, stresses the need for circumspection in airing views likely to shake the foundations of society if broadcast.

The same regard for social stability is evident in the letter to Pope which was published as an introduction to his *Philosophical works*: 'As we think for ourselves, we may keep our thoughts to ourselves and communicate them with a due reserve, and in such a manner only, as it may be done without offending the laws of society and disturbing the public peace'.[15] This pious profession of concern for social order only made the criticism of organised religion which followed seem the more blatant. Thomas Sheridan, who was responsible for an edition of Swift's works which appeared in 1784, used the example of the letter cited above to demonstrate the discrepancy between Bolingbroke's words and his deeds, and painted him as a veritable monster: 'Expressly to direct the publication of writings, which, he believed, would subvert the morals and the happiness of society, at a time when he could derive no private advantage from the mischief was perhaps an act of wickedness more purely diabolical than any hitherto upon record in the history of any age or nation' (xii.131-132). In

[14] *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, ed. H. Williams, iii.26-30 (letter of 12 September 1724).

[15] *Works* (1809), v.112.

1768 readers of Suard's *Variétés littéraires* were to find the same image of a thoroughly ignoble Bolingbroke, loud of mouth but faint of heart, an atheist and an anarchist who chose a course of craven and conspicuous conformity rather than suffer for his opinions, 'un homme qui, après avoir prétendu pendant sa vie aimer son pays, et respecter sa religion, a levé à sa mort le masque que ses craintes lui avaient fait garder jusqu'alors et qui a laissé après lui un traité écrit par lui-même, et publié par son ordre exprès, dans lequel il prêche l'athéisme et ne cherche qu'à exciter la rébellion' (i.397)[16]. The element of truth in this portrait is heavily overlaid with falsehood. Indeed, the anonymous author appears to be half-excusing himself for besmirching Bolingbroke's posthumous reputation when he implies that his subject 'avait moins en vue l'honneur d'être placé au temple de la mémoire après sa mort, que la gloire de jouir d'une grande renommée pendant sa vie.'[17]

'On voit par ses écrits qu'il était habile philosophe et profond politique mais ennemi de la révélation.' This judgement, which appeared in the *Bibliothèque raisonnée* in 1752 (p.472), illustrates fairly well how Bolingbroke's reputation was faring in France at this time. Within a few years there would be fewer critics who would endorse this appraisal of his worth as a philosopher, some who would point to his shortcomings as a political observer, and a great many who would condemn the destructive character of his deistic philosophy. The *Bibliothèque raisonnée*'s comment was occasioned by the efforts of certain English defenders of the faith

[16] Suard notes: 'Ce morceau a été tiré d'une gazette anglaise'.

[17] Johnson's judgement, couched in characteristically pungent and picturesque terms, is often quoted in this connection: 'Sir, he was a scoundrel and a coward: a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward, because he had not the resolution to fire it off himself, but left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death'. Johnson's judgement is cited by G. H. Nadel in his valuable article 'New Light on Bolingbroke's *Letters on History*', *Journal of the history of ideas*, xxiii.4, which corrects to the detriment of Bolingbroke's reputation, the false view, prevalent among Bolingbroke's contemporaries and some of his biographers, of Mallet's misdeeds as a publisher.

(in this case Abraham Le Moine, J. Hervey and bishop Clayton of Clogher) to launch a counter-attack against the aggressive author of the *Letters on history*. Bolingbroke's strictures on organised religion soon aroused strenuous opposition from a host of orthodox critics in England, whose works did not go unnoticed across the channel: to the names already mentioned can be added those of Sykes, Whalley, Anderson, Pye and the better-known ones of Warburton and Leland. The sheer weight of the clerical opposition augured a certain future for Bolingbroke's notoriety as a freethinker. 'As long as there are any parsons' observed Horace Walpole, in a letter he wrote to sir Horace Mann in December 1754, 'he will be marked with Tindal and Toland'. Indeed, some French reviewers were soon accepting rather than discussing the charges brought against Bolingbroke by his compatriots and presenting him as 'un homme qui ne bute qu'à renverser de fond en comble l'autorité et la crédibilité de toute révélation divine'.[18] The *Bibliothèque des sciences et des beaux-arts* stressed the difficulty of classifying Bolingbroke; as far as his life was concerned, 'on le trouve . . . tantôt déiste, tantôt chrétien' (juillet-septembre 1755, iv.118), whilst the conclusion to be drawn from his works is that 'cet auteur . . . est sûrement quelque-chose de plus que déiste, quoiqu'il soit à peine athée' (iv.124). One could with certainty regard Bolingbroke as 'un méprisable ennemi de la religion' (iv.117).

The ambiguity of Bolingbroke's position was felt by the *Journal britannique*: 'Il pousse trop loin les aveux pour un incrédule et les attaques pour un chrétien' (mai-juin 1755, xvii.185). He is presented as 'un homme qui, malgré ses efforts à n'être pas chrétien, paraît plus d'une fois avoir senti combien il est raisonnable de l'être' (xvii.194). Voltaire, one suspects, had his tongue in his cheek when in his *Défense* he presents Bolingbroke as a true Christian 'soumis à cette religion comme un autre', but there was,

[18] *Journal britannique* (mai-juin 1755), xvii.115.

in any case, enough evidence in Bolingbroke's pronouncements to allow such a case to be made. The *Bibliothèque impartiale* rejects Voltaire's presentation as ludicrous and labels Bolingbroke a deist, which it goes on to define as 'un homme qui vit au jour la journée sans se mettre fort à peine de ce que la religion et ses lois exigent de lui, de ce qu'elle lui offre à espérer ou à craindre, qui se fait une gloire d'en avoir secoué le joug' (janvier-juin 1754 ix.281). The same charge is repeated later in an article in the *Variétés littéraires*, in which the author's initial uncertainty about pigeon-holing Bolingbroke seems particularly ill-feigned: 'Pour Milord Bolingbroke je ne sais pas où le placer. S'il y avait du génie à saper toutes les religions dans leurs fondements, je crois qu'il serait le premier de tous ceux qui ont couru cette carrière. Les Hobbes et les Tindall n'auraient place qu'après lui' (i.414).

This view of Bolingbroke as a public enemy prevailed until the beginning of the following century, when distinct signs of a rehabilitation of his reputation are evident. The fifth volume of Saint-Lambert's *Œuvres philosophiques*, for example, published in 1801, contains this description (on p.172) of an enlightened humanist and true *philosophe*: 'Il était zélé théiste; il adorait le Dieu de Platon, de Shafsburi et de Leibniz. Il ne voulait point, comme le dit je ne sais quel journaliste anglais, renverser l'ordre des sociétés et saper les fondements de la morale; il s'était persuadé que la raison humaine, éclairé par la philosophie, épurait davantage les mœurs que le christianisme. Il souhaitait de nous voir affranchis des privations, des mortifications, des cérémonies auxquelles un culte reçu nous assujetit, et il disait qu'il suffit d'être juste pour être vrai fidèle et d'être généreux pour être saint'. There must have been many readers acquainted with less flattering character-sketches who had difficulty in recognising lord Bolingbroke in this almost saintly figure.

The eclectic character of Bolingbroke's *Philosophical works* invited charges of inconsistency and lack of originality. The *Journal britannique* (mars-avril 1755, p.323) particularly resented the disparaging tone in which Bolingbroke referred to the works

of Cudworth and Clarke to whom he was so obviously heavily indebted. Other sources for some of Bolingbroke's ideas had been suggested previously (septembre-octobre 1754, p.91): 'Ceux qui ont lu les écrits de Middleton, de Morgan et de Chubb, ne trouveront ici rien de nouveau'. The *Bibliothèque des sciences et des beaux-arts* (juillet-septembre 1755, iv.117 et seq.) condemns Bolingbroke for not completely assimilating the ideas of other thinkers which he introduces so liberally in his works and illustrates the resulting disharmony by presenting pairs of contradictory statements extracted from the *Philosophical works*, ranged side by side over four pages. Where Bolingbroke follows Locke, his acknowledged master, he finds favour with the editor of the *Journal britannique* (mars-avril 1755, xvi.328, 331); it is when he strikes out on his own and forcefully rejects hypotheses, general ideas and abstractions that Maty takes him to task. Locke's engaging moderation of tone contrasts sharply with the pretentious and bombastic pronouncements of Bolingbroke, whose predilection for political debate manifested itself in the vein of showy rhetoric and venomous invective in his work, and distinguished him, according to Maty, as 'un homme beaucoup plutôt et beaucoup plus orateur que philosophe' (xvi.338).

French reviewers tended to look in Bolingbroke for qualities of refinement and gentility which they associated with his aristocratic background, but they were sorely disappointed to discover, instead, 'des expressions qu'on n'attendrait point d'un homme de sa délicatesse et de sa naissance' (xiii.192). After remarking upon the insults which Bolingbroke heaped upon such writers as Clarke, Cudworth, Cumberland and Woolaston, the *Bibliothèque des sciences et des beaux-arts* comments: 'Telle est la modération du lord philosophe; voilà la politesse de ce fameux auteur. Les écrivains les plus emportés trouveront dans son livre des formules d'injures et de grossièreté qui leur paraîtront originales, et les grammairiens même, malgré l'habileté qu'on leur suppose dans cette manière de dispute peuvent venir puiser des leçons et des exemples dans les œuvres de l'homme de cour et du

bel-esprit' (juillet-septembre 1755, iv.120). The author of an article, translated from English, which appeared in an earlier issue of the same periodical (avril-juin 1754, i.117) found Bolingbroke's vanity and superciliousness insufferable: 'Une chose cependant que nous ne devons pas oublier de relever ici, c'est que, quoique notre auteur s'efforce à prouver la faiblesse de l'entendement humain en général, il ne laisse pas, à ce qu'il semble, d'avoir été pénétré d'une haute opinion du sien en particulier. Un air fier et insultant se peint dans tous ses ouvrages, et de la manière pleine de mépris dont il parle de quelques-uns des plus célèbres philosophes, l'on dirait qu'il s'est regardé comme envoyé du ciel pour instruire le genre humain et pour dissiper les epaisses ténèbres de l'ignorance et de l'erreur dont le monde intellectuel et moral avait été jusqu'ici couvert'. It is clear that Bolingbroke would have done well to remember how his noble compatriot, lord Shaftesbury, had associated philosophizing with good-breeding,[19] for his proficiency as a philosopher, in the eyes of those who used this touchstone, both at home and abroad, must have been regarded as slight indeed.

Fréron is prepared to accept the testimony of those who had known Bolingbroke, and to admit that his intellectual brilliance might have seemed very much like genius to them, but, for his part, he believes that Bolingbroke's defects of characters weigh so heavily in the other scale of the balance that greatness must surely be denied him: 'on peut être né avec un génie supérieur; on peut acquérir une infinité de connaissances et conserver en même temps un cœur ulcéré par la disgrâce, un esprit dur, un caractère inflexible: enfin, être médiocre'.[20] Bolingbroke might have been excused his lack of genius, if his faith in his intellectual superiority had not been so obtrusive. In his *Letters on the spirit of patriotism* he tacitly ranks himself among 'the few who are distinguished by

[19] *Characteristics*, ed. J. M. Robertson (1900), ii.255: 'To philosophise, in a just signification, is but to carry good breeding a step higher'.

[20] *Lettres sur quelques écrits de ce tems* (1752), vi.331-332.

nature so essentially from the herd of mankind that, figure apart, they seem to be of another species'. It was difficult for readers and critics to take Bolingbroke at his own valuation. The editor of the *Journal britannique* (septembre-octobre 1754, xv.66), presenting the first of a series of extracts from Bolingbroke's *Philosophical works*, comments favourably on the author's motto 'nil admirari', but by the time three extracts have been published, he has begun to realise that the appropriateness of the device lies more in Bolingbroke's aristocratic aloofness than in his philosophic detachment, and professes himself happy to be counted a part of the common mass of humanity rather than among 'ces génies que le ciel forma d'un meilleur limon, et qui distingués du commun des hommes vivent sans attente et meurent sans terreur' (juillet-août 1755, xviii.342).

Bolingbroke's inability to abandon hope of political preferment, his brooding discontent with his position of enforced inactivity, lend a hollow ring to his pretentions to equanimity. The *Bibliothèque des sciences et des beaux-arts* (avril-juin 1754, i.117) endorses Horace Walpole's judgement on Bolingbroke: 'Avec les talents les plus aimables et de grandes qualités, il ne fut ni content, ni heureux'. Grimm (i.409) comments on the *Lettres sur l'esprit de patriotisme*: 'le plus grand défaut de cet ouvrage, c'est un air chagrin qui y règne d'un bout à l'autre'. In Fréron's view, 'Mylord Bolingbroke était un homme inquiet, misanthrope et toujours mécontent' (1752, vi.314), and the bitterness and resentment poisoned his writings, for 'cet auteur misanthrope obéissait en écrivant à ce tempérament bilieux qui le dominait' (vi.319-320). Undoubtedly, Bolingbroke, as his private correspondence shows, attempted to project a quite different image of himself as a studious 'eremite', exempt from worldly cares and absorbed in the pursuit of truth. Some of his friends helped to give this view a wider currency. Lord Orrery, for example, drew a most flattering pen-picture which was reproduced in translation in the *Journal britannique*: 'Les passions se calmèrent par l'âge et par les revers; des études et des réflexions plus sérieuses perfec-

tionnèrent ses facultés; il brilla dans sa retraite avec un éclat tout particulier, mais qui échappa à des yeux vulgaires. Le politique libertin devint un philosophe égal à ceux de l'antiquité. La sagesse de Socrate, la dignité et les grâces de Pline, l'esprit et la finesse d'Horace parurent également dans ses écrits et dans sa conversation' (janvier-février 1752, vii.67-68). Pierre Clément, in showing the lack of any convincing evidence of self-mastery which would support Bolingbroke's claims to philosophic stature, is more representative of his fellow French critics in his judgement: 'C'est un philosophe au désespoir qui prêche la tranquillité et se persuade qu'il s'est converti: le "Guéri imaginaire". Il s'est lui-même peint en trois lignes: "Celui qui a laissé dans son âme une seule passion sans être subjuguée ne peut mériter le nom de sage'.[21]

Whoever looked to Bolingbroke for a dispassionate appraisal of historical events and an objective outlook on European affairs was bound to be disappointed. His close involvement in most of the events he wrote about, and his partisan attitude towards the issues he dealt with meant that his treatment of them became inevitably tendentious. He is often at pains to vindicate his equivocal conduct and forestall any charges of fickleness and ingratitude raised by those who regarded the many changes of allegiance during his political career with an unsympathetic eye. This constant need for self-justification could lead to distortions of the truth as the *Journal britannique* pointed out (janvier-février 1753, x.38). The partiality of Bolingbroke's judgements in matters of domestic politics was often evident to his most indulgent French readers: Saint-Lambert, for example, regrets this failing in him: 'J'avoue que dans ses écrits j'ai vu quelquefois l'homme de parti, l'esprit de faction, nuire aux lumières'.[22]

As a commentator on foreign affairs, Bolingbroke sounded frequently like a rather blustering John Bull, and did not fail to arouse the patriotic antagonism of French critics. Fréron, for

[21] *Les Cinq années littéraires* (1755), ii.237-238.

[22] *Œuvres philosophiques*, v.5.

example, reacts indignantly against the harsh treatment meted out to France by the author of the *Lettres on History*: 'Mais l'auteurs est tellement aigri contre notre nation qu'il ne saurait modérer la force de ses termes. Partout nos conquêtes sont traitées d'usurpations, notre modération d'artifice, notre générosité de feinte et notre politique de fourberie' (1752, vi.321). Such abuse is all the more shocking in Fréron's eyes because it reflects Bolingbroke's base ingratitude towards the hospitable sovereign of the country where he had spent his exile (vi.314). Indeed, Bolingbroke's reliability as an interpreter of his own country's affairs must, he suggests, be questioned; after all, defects could lie in the jaundiced eye of the beholder (vi.327). Fréron was not alone in entertaining a healthy scepticism about Bolingbroke's gloomy prognostications of imminent catastrophe for a country paralysed by political apathy and sunk in corruption. Montesquieu, in a letter which he wrote in 1756, expresses (in terms recalling those used by Bolingbroke at an earlier phase of his political career) his confidence in the undying spirit of liberty ingrained in the English people which, he believes, is a certain guarantee of the soundness of the country's political institutions.[23] During his stay in England he had noted Bolingbroke's fulminations against the Walpole administration and, though he was well aware of the value of his ideas, he regretted the excess of polemical fervour with which they were expressed: 'Certainement il a beaucoup de chaleur, mais il ne semble qu'il l'emploie ordinairement contre les choses et il ne faudrait l'employer qu'à peindre les choses'.[24] Montesquieu was, of course, an altogether more constructive writer; and it is part of his immense achievement, as author of *L'Esprit des lois*, to have been able to abstract from the heated atmosphere of political debate some of Bolingbroke's opinions about issues of burning actuality and to have invested

[23] the draft of this letter, addressed to m. Domville, is included among the *Pensées* of Montesquieu in the *Œuvres complètes*, éd. A. Masson, ii.592-595.

[24] letter 714 (Montesquieu to Warburton [mai 1754?]); iii.1509.

them with the significance of fundamental data in the nascent science of politics.[25]

For many of his French critics, Bolingbroke, as a writer, exemplified the characteristic virtues and defects which they generally associated with English men of letters. 'On ne peut nier' says Fréron, generalising from Bolingbroke's particular case, 'qu'il n'y ait dans leurs ouvrages beaucoup de génie d'imagination et de feu mais ces qualités brillantes sont obscurcies par le mauvais goût' (vi.146). Bolingbroke is more often than not given credit for the vigour of his prose style, the force of his imagination and a certain originality of mind, but, on the debit side, he is just as often taxed with his lack of clarity, order and concision, the qualities most highly prized by French critics. The *Journal de Trévoux* praises the author of the *Letters on the spirit of patriotism*, who writes 'noblement et fièrement' (octobre-décembre 1750, p.2222) and points out certain shortcomings of the translation of the *Letters on history*, absent from 'un original plein de feu, d'impétuosité et de grandes images' (octobre-décembre 1752, p.2400). The *Bibliothèque des sciences et des beaux-arts* is impressed by Bolingbroke's style, if not by his arguments: 'il écrit bien, mais raisonne mal' (avril-juin 1754, i.146). Fréron finds in the *Mémoires secrets* 'de la force, de la fécondité, et de l'éloquence', but the work is marred slightly, he feels, by 'un peu de désordre' (1754, v.141). Grimm suggests that any doubts about the authorship of the *Testament politique de milord Bolingbroke* could be resolved by an examination of the style: 'beaucoup de feu, ce ton de déclamation qui lui appartient, point d'ordre, de longues digressions. C'est bien là milord Bolingbroke' (ii.153-154). The most kindly disposed of Bolingbroke's critics, Saint-Lambert, expresses his regret that there is 'plus de chaleur que d'ordre dans ses écrits' (v.206).

The tortuousness of Bolingbroke's style is sometimes seen as being connected with the deviousness of his behaviour. Grimm

[25] Montesquieu's debt to Bolingbroke is amply illustrated in Robert Shackleton's magisterial and definitive biography of the former, published in 1961.

suspects that the ambiguity of his style is often wilful, a means of obscuring certain issues or veiling the less appealing aspects of his character and conduct: 'il a craint quelquefois d'être clair' (i.409). Horace Walpole makes the same point: 'C'est un de nos meilleurs écrivains, quoiqu'ayant attaqué tout gouvernement et toute religion, et ne voulant avouer directement ni l'un ni l'autre, son style en soit nécessairement embarrassé et obscur.'[26] To other critics, like Pierre Clément, Bolingbroke's involved and laborious style was irritating because it seemed to stem from an inclination to eschew clarity and simplicity which was wholly inexplicable: 'Il y a peut-être plus de pensées dans une page de Mylord Bolingbroke que dans trois d'un autre; mais il arrive de là que sa manière d'écrire est quelquefois fatigante, sa phrase longue et un peu embarrassée; des parenthèses, des renvois à des idées éloignées; point de verbiage de rhéteur comme Cicéron, mais un certain appareil philosophique, un air de réflexion, de travail de tête et d'endoctrinement, répandu jusque sur des choses qu'il ne tenait qu'à lui de penser sans effort et nous faire entendre à notre aise' (ii.258-259).

Bolingbroke had often been the object of hero-worship during his life and perhaps those eighteenth-century critics who, after his death, so zealously guarded what they held sacred against the attacks of the iconoclast were not entirely innocent of a little gleeful iconoclasm themselves. Saint-Lambert's judgement, delivered at the turn of the century, seems, therefore, all the more conspicuous for its moderation. Bolingbroke, one feels, would not have been altogether displeased with this epitaph: 'Il fut un grand homme; il faut jeter des fleurs sur son tombeau, mais il ne faut pas lui dresser des autels'. (v.206).

[26] quoted from an account of the *Catalogue of the royal and noble authors of England* in the *Bibliothèque des sciences et des beaux-arts* (janvier-mars 1759), p.159.

The Rococo muddle

by R. G. Saisselin

I. The muddle perceived

Like many linguistic-philosophical puzzles the art-historical rococo muddle is the result of Germanic migrations. It suggests that it is not only unwise to mix languages but imaginations as well, and brings once more to mind the virtues of clear and distinct ideas.

Let us dip into it by way of reading through standard histories of art, for it is through these that the muddle becomes a veritable system of puzzles. Consider French eighteenth century painting. All too often we still think of it as that of Watteau, Boucher, and Fragonard for the *fêtes galantes*, naughtiness, and *esprit* bordering on the erotic; Chardin sums up still life painting and bourgeois virtues; Greuze incarnates bourgeois sentimentalism and allows an easy literary parallel with the *drame bourgeois* of Diderot and Sedaine, and if David is still included in the eighteenth century he is the sign of the coming of the French revolution. On the whole little has been done to modify the vision left us by the Goncourts who re-established what the followers of David and the *beau idéal* had discredited. If anything the vision has indeed become rather blurred because art historians also came to speak of rococo painting. Thus some call Fragonard a rococo painter, even though he worked at the time of the neo-classic revival. For others Watteau becomes the creator of more than a genre in painting to be the innovator of the rococo fashion and taste. Thus rococo painting is

described as 'intimate in scale and deliciously sensual in style and subject' for those who look at Fragonard, while those who turn to Watteau consider the rococo taste or fashion to be one for 'dainty colours and delicate decoration which succeeded the more robust taste of the Baroque period, and which expressed itself in gay frivolity'. A third school does not see Watteau like this at all, but rather as melancholy.

It is all rather discouraging and one doesn't quite know who is what while obscurity descends upon the age of enlightenment. However, trained as we are, we go on reading and a persistent glimmer soon allows us to distinguish a solid art-historical building block, to wit that the eighteenth century is divisible into two equal parts: rococo and neo-classic.[1] Both terms are associated with general styles and described by sets of words of opposed meaning. The rococo is dainty, deliciously sensual, frivolous, gay and intimate, decorative, and curvilinear; while the neo-classic is sober, rational, severe, hard, serious, and dominated by straight lines.

At this point we may well ask: what happened? and answer: Hegel, Wagner, Wölfflin and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In other words, a Germanic migration bringing in its wake a taste for elaborate near-metaphysical-historical constructions leading to the blurring of frontiers and consequent loss of clear views. The jesuitical *je distingue* is replaced by a *Weltanschauung*. Rokoko is here. And, we must add, it is here at the expense of historical verisimilitude and clear perception, thus leading to the neglect of a great many painters, blurring of various aspects of the eighteenth century, and the ossification of the discipline of art history.

[1] a similar division, based upon the opposition of sentiment and reason, also exists in literary studies. See Roland Mortier's discussion of this division, as poor as that of rococo-neo-classic, in his article 'Unité ou scission au siècle des Lumières', *Transactions of the First International congress on the Enlightenment*, in *Studies on Voltaire and the eighteenth century*, xxvi.1207-1221.

The view of the eighteenth century above delineated is as partial as those found in literary textbooks which sum up the century in terms of four great names: Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot. If you are in literature you read the same selections over and over and if you are in art history you see the same pictures over and over, though you here have a choice between colour and black and white. The history of XVIIIth century French art is thus fixed by certain photographs which we might classify as being inevitable, almost inevitable, common, not so common, and rare: Watteau, *Fête in a park*, inevitable; *Embarkation for Cythera*, almost inevitable, *Gersaint's sign*, ditto, *Gilles*, common, *Italian comedians*, common; Chardin, *Still life*, inevitable, *Saying grace*, almost inevitable, *Boy with teetotum*, *Soap bubbles*, *House of cards*, common; Greuze, *The Village bride*, inevitable, *The Father's curse*, inevitable, *Broken pitcher*, or *Broken mirror*, almost inevitable. David's *Horatii*, *Brutus*, his Greeks and his Romans generally are inevitable. Boucher, *Nude on a Sofa*, *Toilet of Venus*, *Pastoral scene*, *Madame de Pompadour* are either inevitable or almost inevitable. Fragonard offers inevitably the four magnificent paintings of the Frick museum, plus, inevitably, one or another version of the *Swing*, while there are almost inevitably *Washerwomen*, letters, stolen robes, and nudes bathing or bedding. This view reflects not only a certain taste of the eighteenth century, but also a corresponding taste of the nineteenth century which some regard favourably, and others unfavourably, in which case the entire age is dismissed by the derogatory epithet 'rococo'. There is little doubt that this 'established' *dix-huitième* offers great advantages to writers of histories of art: it is a highly manageable view of the eighteenth century, and in terms of editorial problems we might even say it is a managerial view. It allows one to forget that the *fêtes galantes* were but one genre of painting; that Chardin was not the only painter of still life or Boucher the sole great decorator; that Greuze was not alone in being sentimental and that David was far from being the only painter of history; as for

Fragonard, his importance goes beyond his supposedly rococo subjects.

This manageable view of the eighteenth century leaves out of consideration the century's being shaped by another past, its freedom to choose among several possible pasts, and the implications of such choices; the milieu, artistic, social, and cultural, in which artists worked, the assumptions on which they worked; and also highly important, the novel situation of art in the age of enlightenment which would operate radical changes in artistic thought and eventually practice, as well as alter the role of art and artists in society. In terms of more precise pictorial realms, the manageable, rococo-inspired view of eighteenth century French painting, leaves out of consideration academic art and history painting, the very rich tradition of still-life painting, while it restricts the art of portraiture to but a few representative artists of whom La Tour is in the inevitable category at the expense of others quite as good. Insofar as specific painters are concerned, Lemoyne, Troy, the Coypels, Oudry, Desportes, Largillière, Natoire, and others working in the second half of the century, are neglected, sometimes for good, sometimes for poor reasons, but for the historian they must at least be taken into account.

In a sense we might argue that art history is at an impasse because of purely formal criteria and because it refuses to take into account the minds which informed the works and the relations between the art of painting and other social, aesthetic, and even political manifestations of the period. True enough that 'Rokoko' arose as an attempt to do just that, but the attempt failed because no one century can be comprised under one or even two terms which are at once descriptive, normative, and at the same time historical. The rococo muddle arose when a pejorative term, rococo, used to denote the *style Louis XV*, a style of decoration characterized by the curvilinear design, was extended into a general style of art, thought, manners, values.[2] The error

[2] there is an excellent summary of the history and use of the term rococo in Alfred Anger, *Literarisches Rokoko* (Realienbücher für Germanisten,

consisted in reasoning on the basis of only one element, and perhaps giving that one element an importance far beyond its weight in history. An abstraction resulted which is still very much with us and which is far from being dead. It has, indeed, even reached French scholars of literature who begin to apply the concept of

Sammlung Metzler: Stuttgart 1962), part 1. The development of and the use of the word from rococo to *der Rokoko* may be subdivided as follows:

a) *rococo* is a pejorative *atelier* term in the last decade of the XVIIIth century in France used to ridicule the *style Louis XV*; it is restricted to interior decoration; this use persists into the period of the restoration in France and it is still often used in that manner, perhaps with less derogation today, though one wonders, given the confusion of language in our dynamic world, how long this still sensible meaning will persist. In any case in 1930 Louis Réau still defined the word as follows in his little *Dictionnaire d'Art et d'Archéologie:* '*Rococo* (mot formé de rocaille). 1) Style décoratif qui succède dans le second tiers du XVIIIe siècle au style baroque. Il est caractérisé comme lui par le goût des ornements contournés, des formes tourmentées, par la haine de la ligne droite; mais il s'en distingue par une joliesse mièvre qui est à l'opposé des puissantes redondances du baroque; 2) A la suite de la réaction classique, rococo a pris un sens péjoratif et est devenu synonyme de vieillot, démodé'. It will be noted that this definition places the rococo style somewhat later than the Régence period and that even in the 'objective' descriptive first part, the word *mièvre* (affected) is evaluative.

b) in Germany, before 1848, the word is also used in a pejorative sense but more broadly than in France to include the entire *ancien régime* which was at this time still very much alive in the Germanies; thus in France the pejorative aspect concerns taste; in the Germanies certain social and cultural values. The term is definitely on the way of inflation.

c) later in the nineteenth century German art historians use the term to designate no longer merely an interior decorative style, but an entire cultural epoch: *Der Rokoko*, considered as an international phenomenon, though in opposition to *Die Klassik* for the art historians and *Die Aufklärung* for the literary historians. By 1919 Max von Boehn calls the entire XVIIIth century in France Rokoko; in the Propylaen Kunstgeschichte volume (of 1929) on the rococo the term is used in a broad artistic sense though it is restricted to the decades of about 1720 through 1760.

d) in the 1920's German literary historians begin to use the art historical concept Rokoko to single out a rococo literature and rococo literary traits.

e) today the term is well entrenched among American art historians while French literary critics and historians begin to be interested in the term and its open possibilities. The inflation is complete. See also C. T. Carr, 'Two words in art history: II. Rococo', *Forum for modern language*, i.266-281.

'rococo' to literature, much as their former German colleagues did in the 1920's when, borrowing from the art historians, they sought to characterize the traits of first a French then a German rococo literature and mental structure.[3]

Thus by a curious and ironic peregrination, from the studios of the late XVIIIth century in which *rococo* was a term of mockery, through the writings of art historians and theorists to those of literary scholars, the term has come back to art with the results such a trip is often likely to bring: the wanderer is exhausted. The term is one of those meaningless terms which clutter the mind, yet continue to be used with qualifying phrases to the confusion of readers, hearers, and speakers. For surely we know too much about, and have seen too much diversity in, the eighteenth century to suppose we can still fruitfully have recourse to these neo-hegelian habits of thought. Rococo is a bad word: do not use.

One ought not to forget that decoration is one art, painting another, writing a third, and music a fourth, and that while at certain times in history it is quite obvious that they all seem to be part of a general style and play a harmonious concert, the fundamental bass of the concert is in the minds of the instrumentalists rather than in any one instrument or section of the orchestra. It must also be remembered that in these particular types of historical concerts, there were often too many conductors so that certain dissonances resulted. Sometimes the conductor was an architect, sometimes the director of the Academy, at others the director of the Bâtiments du roi, or, for that matter, the minister of finance, not to mention strong-willed patrons who thought they knew what they wanted.

[3] Roger Laufer, *Style rococo, style des lumières* (Paris 1963). Here the term is being used to study French XVIIIth century literature on the model made by the German literary historians of the 1920's. The term risks becoming totally meaningless. Voltaire's *Lettres philosophiques*, for example, become a manifestation of *une démarche rococo*, while Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois* shows a rococo structure.

This is not to question the autonomy of art or styles, but merely to guard against raising such autonomy or transforming it into some new platonic-type essence floating above the world of men and historical changes and events. Styles, we might say, are autonomous insofar as they are established, terminated, and subject to critical examination and judgement or objects of aesthetic enjoyment; but in their periods of life and creation, they were associated with certain values and men, and subject to various non-aesthetic influences. It is therefore probably an error to consider and treat art history in terms of an autonomous development of forms and styles proceeding from others and metamorphosing themselves irrespective of history. In any case it does not suit the XVIIIth century too well precisely because of the impact of historical thinking at that time upon men and arts. Also, still thinking of the XVIIIth century and particularly of France, and more particularly of Paris, it is probably unwise to discount the personal character, taste, and intervention of certain men acting through various state institutions upon the arts: the duc d'Antin, director of the Bâtiments du roi in the early part of the century, Caylus the antiquarian and amateur, Charles Antoine Coypel, *premier peintre* and director of the Academy; Cochin, acting *premier peintre*, though in fact only secretary of the Academy under Marigny, whose role is also of a certain weight, though less than that of the comte d'Angivillier and of his executive Pierre.

The history of eighteenth century French art and painting still remains to be written, at least re-thought or re-examined in the light of the knowledge gained over the past fifty or sixty years. One minor instance: every text-book of art history in the United States mentions the quarrel of the Poussinists and the Rubénists. It is as inevitable in prose as Louise O'Murphy's lovely behind is in photographs. Yet none of the texts alluded to mention the eventual victory of those we might term neo-Poussinists, who never really understood Poussin, over the Rubénists who understood the implications of Rubens's painting much

better than their opponents understood Poussin. The role of the French Academy in Rome in the course of the century also deserves study, as does that of the surviving Académie de Saint-Luc.

These areas have been explored, but the works of Pierre Marcel for the first half of the XVIIIth century, Locquin for history, Fontaine for artistic theory, and Lapauze for the Roman Academy are out of print and their findings have not been assimilated into either a manageable or managerial view of the century. Their works, however, remain invaluable as points of departure for a truly novel re-thinking of the period, and such re-thinking must be based upon a broader approach than the now existing narrow confines of traditional, formalistic, and antiquarian art history. It is all very well to mention the quarrel of the Poussinists and the Rubénists, but what did that quarrel imply about art, artistic thinking, and artistic choices? The point is that the entire affair was in part what our contemporary philosophers would term a false problem. It was very important, but not because the Rubénists and therefore colour won out over design, but rather 'taste' over doctrine. The quarrel is but one aspect of the intellectual revolution of the period which affected painting one way in the first half of the century and quite another, for various reasons and from various sources, in the second half.[4] The relation of the intellectual revolution of the times to painting has, however, hardly ever been taken into account. Yet surely it is important to consider the vulgarization of interest in art and the development of

[4] see the highly suggestive essay by Pierre Francastel, 'L'Esthétique des Lumières', in *Utopie et institutions au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris &c. 1963). Francastel's work borders on several subjects which have heretofore been separate, namely aesthetics, sociology, art history, and history. The more conventional approaches to the XVIIIth century were laid in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth and are represented by the thorough work of the art historians mentioned: Pierre Marcel, *La Peinture française au début du dix-huitième siècle, 1690-1721* (Paris 1910); Jean Locquin, *La Peinture d'histoire en France de 1747 à 1785* (Paris 1912); Henri Lapauze, *Histoire de l'Académie de France à Rome* (Paris 1924); André Fontaine, *Les Doctrines d'art en France de Poussin à Diderot* (Paris 1909).

art criticism, not to mention aesthetics? If art history is to live up to its name of history it surely must broaden the field to include those other social and cultural manifestations which touch upon and sometimes alter the arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, in short the arts of design, and which often help to determine their 'meaning .

II. Paris, Munich, Potsdam

If in the realm of painting the rococo muddle is the result of a *Weltanschauung*, in architecture and interior decoration it is perhaps due to a certain type of art-historian's myopia. Certain lines, curves, and decorative motifs are perceived in Parisian town houses, charmingly named royal residences in Bavaria and Brandenburg, and a new international style is created in the minds of art historians and named Rokoko because the contemporaries of that style have already been called rococo for various political and social reasons. Thus by a veritable intellectual tour de force, a *Geisteskunstwerk* is created and a supposedly international rococo style, analogous to that of the late medieval period (also known as the international courtly style), is complemented by a rococo *esprit* or *Zeitgeist*. Menzel's illustrations of the life of Frederick the great, especially the scenes of Voltaire at Sans Souci, and of dinner and concerts, lend colour to a lovely fiction. There is only one thing wrong: Frederick's verses were Brandenburg French.

There is little doubt that curves have certain affinities. The serpentine line in Germany is much the same in France, Britain, or Italy. There are also motifs used in decoration which have a life or substance akin to platonic essences. The family resemblance between a cartouche by P. E. Babel (*c.* 1720-1770), a *surtout* design by Meissonier (1693/95-1750), and a clock design by Habermann (1721-1796) is apparent to all. The decorative

motifs of the hôtel de Soubise, Nymphenburg, and Sans Souci show the same family resemblance. It is even possible to call this resemblance *rococo*. But to use the word in this restricted manner is one thing and to use it as implying a Zeitgeist and a general European style is quite another. To do the latter is to create an abstraction and lose one's sense of proportion. One thus fails to see notable differences between Paris, Potsdam, and Munich. Eighteenth century Germany was not eighteenth century France, and German monarchs and the German nobility were quite different from those of France and particularly those in Paris.[5]

This should suffice to throw doubts on the Zeitgeist, but one needs, in our time, to supply proofs. The proof, however, is still with us, namely in the long-range effects of the French revolution. Nothing so much as that event points to an essential difference between the two banks of the Rhine. The Germans and the French more or less read the same works when they read French, but, assuming for the present that the philosophical movement was a potent factor in the formation of a revolutionary opinion, they obviously did not read the same way in the same milieux. Thus in the arts of design, the French and the Germans did not use rococo motifs in the same way and when French designers supplied motifs and plans for German princes they did not necessarily supply the same to French patrons.[6] One need but make certain comparisons: the interior of the hôtel de Soubise by Boffrand with interiors from Nymphenbourg by Cuvilliés or the concert room at Sans Souci by Hoppenhaupt. It is quite clear from this and other examples too numerous to mention, that French interior decoration even at the time of the so-called rococo style, was subject to a policy of containment. In Germany, however, the word which readily comes to mind is proliferation. The

[5] see the work of A. Faucher-Magnan, *Les Petites cours d'Allemagne au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris 1947), especially the chapters dealing with the social background of the period.

[6] Louis Hautecœur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France* (Paris 1955), III.1.iv, La Décoration.

difference between the two attitudes to decor is a matter of proportion, a word never used in descriptions of rococo. To use the word rococo to describe one style in two geographic areas is to forget the presence of Paris, taste, the Academy, and the milieu within which the French architects and designers had to work; and on the other hand the *absence* of an Academic tradition, taste (as understood in Paris before 1750) and the influence of a cultivated *élite* in Germany. In short it is to forget the time lag between French art and taste and the condition of Germany.[7] It further leaves out of consideration the relation of these two nations with a third artistic power: Italy.

German royal and princely residences are the works of Italian, German, as well as French architects and designers. It is not our aim to establish any hierarchy of national styles or even contributions; we merely wish to establish certain differentiations and in view of these we may say that on the whole the Italians left their mark on the façades and on religious architecture; the French on interior disposition and decoration. However, German architects and designers added to both interior and exterior and it is hardly possible to consider Fisher von Erlach, Neumann, Hildebrandt, Poppelmann or Knobelsdorff as being merely imitators of Italian or French styles.[8] On the contrary the various German courts, princes, and their architects produced a rather unique architectural style and it does not take an over-acute eye to perceive the differences between French, Italian, or German styles of the XVIIIth century.[9] In view of these differences it must be stressed

[7] a similar time-lag obtains in the realm of religious architecture; see Nicolas Powell, *From baroque to rococo: an introduction to Austrian and German architecture* (New York 1959). One ought not to forget that in the eighteenth century France was a very *modern* country.

[8] according to Powell the number of German architects working in the XVIIIth century in Germany, especially in church building, far outweighs the Italians. Stylistic influence may have been Italian, but it is obvious that the German churches and even palaces cannot be considered mere imitations.

[9] see the plates in Edwin Redslob, *Barok und Rokoko in den Schlössern von Berlin und Potsdam* (Berlin 1954), and Willy Kurth, *Sanssouci. Ein Beitrag*

that what is called the *Rokoko* as manifest in Potsdam, Munich, Dresden, corresponds to a completely different *esprit* and taste to that which obtained in the Paris of the regency and the early part of the reign of Louis XV. When one begins to think about the people associated with these styles, the kings, princes, and courts on both sides of the Rhine, one begins to wonder about the aptness of the words used to describe rococo: frivolous, gay, trivial, light, playful intimate, and jesting.

After all, just how frivolous were the regent, Louis XV, Augustus the strong, Maria Theresa, and Frederick II? But having posed this question merely brings to mind another: was the XVIIIth century frivolous? When we assume it is, are we not looking at the contemporaries of Louis XV as if we were all Jean Jacques Rousseau, who never really penetrated Parisian and aristocratic mores and mistook the amiable mask of the *honnête homme* for a sign of degenerescence? Are people who wear wigs necessarily frivolous, gay, light, playful? Is a delightful XVIIIth century interior a sign of frivolity and escapism, or is it on the contrary an indication of toughness and clear perception? Indeed might it not be argued that certain aspects of eighteenth century art were the work of a tough-minded minority who knew well enough that what mattered was living well and that to do so was an art which implied in its turn the subordination of other arts to that supreme achievement? When one considers the period of the regency and the first part of the reign of Louis XV, one ought not to forget that men like Fontenelle, Voltaire, and Montesquieu, who represent the thought of the period in Paris rather well, were anything but frivolous. Thus the gay, light and playful rococo period, so-called, is contemporary to a *pénétration d'esprit* which was to have history-making consequences, and which very few people today are familiar with or inured to and which makes the sense of the absurd of the existentialists a mere literary pose and attitude. Yet

zur Kunst des Deutschen Rokoko (Berlin 1962); also Werner Hager, *Die Bauten des Deutschen Baroks, 1690-1770* (Jena 1942).

these people, who made a revolution, lived in a supposedly 'rococo' period.

Now the situation and function of rococo motifs in the various German princely states was altogether different: the degree of civility had not reached the point it had in France or in Paris. We might say that the Germans were still not sure of themselves. After all, they had not yet formed and polished their language. They had not yet found the literary forms proper to their own temperament and situation. In the realm of politics they were subject either to French or Hapsburg influences, later Russian pressures. In the realm of courtly manners and mores, things French were on the whole the rage with the results such an attitude often brings in its wake. This was remarked upon by many French travellers to Germany while German writers complained about the slavish copying of the French by the Germans who read. French virtues and vices were imported pell mell, and French cooks, valets, and *petits maîtres*, as well as painters and architects, found various types of opportunity in Germany.

One may thus consider the differences between the French and German use of *rocaille* motifs within the general context of this cultural differentiation. A German prince wishing to build a residence in the French taste would want to be sure that it was indeed in that taste, and consequently might somewhat exaggerate the French elements. Thus Cuvilliès, the true successor of Meissonier, and the latter himself, never had much success in France, but he found his way in Bavaria. Oppenord, true enough, could be relied upon to be as productive of fantasies as his later German counterparts, but his imagination, bountiful in drawings and projects, was in the realization of interiors limited by the milieu within which he worked. In Paris taste limited the imagination to produce a harmony, a measure, between fantasy and the requirements of reason.[10] In Germany, however, taste, perhaps confused

[10] see Hautecœur, iii.618. Montesquieu's *Essai sur le goût dans les choses de la nature et de l'art* throws some light upon French taste at this period and especially attitudes towards symmetry, contrast, and order, all matters

with a French fashion, served to proliferate the creations of the imagination. The function of the motifs thus served different purposes in the two geographic areas. When Louis xv built the *petits appartements* he meant to escape grandeur; in Germany this never happened and the proliferation of rococo motifs served the opposite purpose of a German *force de frappe*.

The result is that in a French room with *rocaille* decorations one knows very well that the decor is a detail subordinate to the ensemble, and not crowding the panel. But in the Neues Palais in Sans Souci, in Nymphenburg, the decoration is such as to crowd out empty space and the perceiver is reminded of flamboyant gothic. In France the effect is not the same for a simple reason: the *style rocaille* came after the establishment of classical standards of taste and judgement. In Germany, however, the Klassik follows the Rokoko. Rococo is a poor term; it won't do.

But if rococo wont't do, will baroque? This of course poses other problems, among which we shall carefully avoid that of defining the baroque, the arch-problem poser of them all. Yet there is one problem which cannot be avoided since it throws considerable light upon the problem of rococo. We refer to the religious architecture of south Germany, of Bavaria and Austria. This architecture is often referred to as late baroque, a term more fitting and accurate than calling them rococo, even though one may find a kindred spirit in the use of a decoration in these churches and in, let us say, Nymphenburg. But here again the family resemblance is confined to curves, airyness, and profusion, but not function.

If it can be argued, on quite reasonable grounds, that there is a violation of taste in the profusion of decorative motifs in the

of concern to architects and interior decorators. Now while the term rococo was not used in the early eighteenth century, the term gothic was and much in the way that rococo was later used. We may infer from the use of the term gothic that profusion of ornament was considered to be in bad taste; also Italian façades were not highly regarded at this time.

interiors of princely residences, the same argument cannot be held with regard to south German baroque church architecture and decor. The reason is simple and may be summed up in the one term which was often used in discussion of taste in the first half of the eighteenth century: rapport. The decors, the stucco, the curves, the forms, the light are all fitting to the end. South German baroque church architecture does not violate *convenance*: it fits the particular type of people the churches were built for and it befits their particular form of Catholicism. Thus one must carefully distinguish one's standards of judgement and assess religious forms in terms of religious standards, and secular forms in terms of secular values. Here too one must distinguish between nations and not judge eighteenth century French church architecture in terms of some over-all style which supposedly finds its highest and best expression in south Germany; for just as French princes and *honnêtes gens* were quite unlike their German social counterparts, so French catholicism, Gallican in orientation, ever bordering on Jansenism, conditioned by Bossuet's emphasis on reason rather than emotion, is quite different from the simple faith of Bavarian and Austrian country folk. Incidentally, looking at the possible implications of this architecture, the existence of such church architecture ought to make one wonder about the penetration of the *Aufklärung*.

There are artistic styles, made up of artistic elements which are the common fund of artists and craftsmen in various nations and which are used in various ways; but it does not follow that giving a common name to these various elements enlightens the perceiver of family relations, for styles are not abstractions and art is inseparable from history, which is never very simple.

III. The diversity of Europe

The use of terms such as mannerist, baroque, rococo, neo-classic veils the richness and diversity of the arts of the periods

they refer to. As concerns rococo, the diversity of Europe is disregarded for the scholastic advantages of a unity of style. Various manners of perception, the relation of taste to history, art, and society, are sacrificed to a purist's concept of art history and the formalist fallacy triumphs. We have replaced the grand tour by verbal and photographic excursions with the results described in the first part of this essay: a managerial *dix-huitième*. It is by now a well travelled and quite dull tourist route which would undoubtedly surprise and eventually bore an eighteenth century scholar-amateur. For where we tend to think of supra-national styles, he was probably more likely to think in terms of a diversity of taste, mores, manners, and arts. It was indeed this very geographical and historical diversity which caused him so much trouble whenever he sat down to write an essay on taste or beauty. For while he thought of these as universals, it was all too painfully obvious that in reality the arts showed a highly unmanageable diversity: thence the ambiguity and abstract nature of the many discussions of beauty and taste in the eighteenth century. He finally resolved all doubts and contradictions by assuming that there was only one true art and one true beauty, namely the antique. The rest was merely regarded as bad taste, or rococo. We, however, can no longer do that. Nor can we simply say there were two styles in the XVIIIth century. We must once more accept the very real diversity of Europe. To do this it might be well to proceed along the lines set by the archeologists and think in terms of regions and geography, rather than of styles succeeding each other in the realm of neo-hegelian thought.

'It would be useless to prove at length', wrote the *abbé* Du Bos in his *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1719), 'that there are countries which never saw a great painter or a great poet. For example, everyone knows that nothing but wild poets, rough versifiers, and cold colorists ever came from the extremities of the North' (1732 ed., ii.82). For Du Bos and his contemporaries Italy still enjoyed an almost unrivalled prestige, even though he lived

and wrote at a time when Paris was beginning to rival Rome as an artistic centre. More than that, he and other scholars knew very well that civilization and history grew so to say outward from the Mediterranean basin. Under Louis XIV civilization had finally planted rather firm roots in France; it did not, however, reach much beyond Holland where, thought Du Bos, painting already showed signs of being, so to say, numbed by the cold. Given eighteenth century theories of climatic effects on physiology and imagination, these were not unreasonable assumptions. It was very well known that the Italians were very volatile and imaginative, and surely the influence of the sun and the skies of Italy might account for this! Montesquieu, on his travels through Germany found, for example, that the Germans were extremely slow-witted.[11] As for Britain, the climate there had never been favourable to the arts of design.

Du Bos turned out to be both right and wrong: the arts did finally flourish beyond Holland, but the prestige of Italy continued to be high, though that of French artists and architects mounted, while the nations beyond the Rhine frontier inspired themselves from both Italians and French examples, yet managed to transform these precedents into something peculiarly fitting to their wants and tastes. It is thus possible to think of eighteenth century art history in terms of a map which, as time moved on, we might gradually fill in with lines and colours, the former to represent lines of force, the latter areas dominated by certain tastes or manners. Circles of various dimensions might be used to delimit artistic centres of two general types: those who attracted, trained, and exported artists, and those who imported them. At the beginning of the century our map would be crowded in Holland and in Italy, less crowded in France, though there would be a rather big circle in Paris, while it would be rather bare in the Germanies, the Scandinavian areas and Russia, and perhaps only slightly more filled in England and Spain. But by the end of the

[11] see *Voyages*, in *Œuvres complètes* (Pléiade éd.), i.809.

century the map would be crowded and from our perspective we can only say that there obviously was an artistic explosion in the course of that century. We might even supplement our original map with specialized maps: one for tourists, one for connoisseurs, one for the English and one for the Germans, one for those primarily interested in nature and one for those interested in the past, in which case the map would have to be extended to include Egypt, Greece, and Syria. We might even have a combination of all of these, excepting that of natural sights, to help scholars writing histories of civilization, its origins and various stages.[12] At this point we might conclude that the eighteenth century had gone not only through an artistic, but also an historical explosion.

An artistic master map of Europe of 1790 would have presented a state quite different from that imagined by Du Bos in 1719. Today there are two artistic capitals in the world: New York and Paris, with New York in the ascendant; London might be added as a purchasing centre. In the eighteenth century there were three: Paris, Rome and Venice, with Paris leading creativity in the fiist half of the century, maintaining itself for the rest, though finding serious competition in Rome precisely in the realm of the antique. Venice has a rather different rôle: she exported artists, but she hardly drew any there except as visitors. Paris and Rome on the other hand were centres of artistic attraction, formation, and exportation.

In the course of the second half of the century, these three primary circles denoting artistic centres, would have to be supplemented by many secondary rings for other centres of artistic formation: these would be centres which had established new academies or had reformed and revived dormant ones. There would be many such centres in Germany and France, there would be some in the capital cities of Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Spain, and

[12] the eighteenth century not only wrote essays on taste, but also on history and civilization and the two were closely connected activities. See my essay 'Le Passé, le goût, et l'histoire', *Studies on Voltaire and the eighteenth century* (1963), xxvii.1445-1455.

England, but these centres would also be complemented by others which drew artists because they offered work: Düsseldorf, Würzburg, Cologne, Ludwigsburg, Dresden, Munich, Stockholm, Warsaw, St Petersburg, Vienna, Paris, Bordeaux, Dijon, Nancy, Strasbourg, and London. All these cities offered work, but in the end, when all is examined one may still say that only Paris and Rome provided the artistic and mental stimulus necessary to artistic thought and work, while Venice exported its genius, Tiepolo. These centres would be joined by lines tracing the movement of architects, decorators, sculptors, painters, draftsmen, connoisseurs, and gentlemen acquiring final polish. A great many German gentlemen would go to Paris, while German artists might go there or to Rome. The French, on the whole, travelled less to Italy than did the English, though the French Academy regularly dispatched prize winners to its branch in Rome. A great many French, of various occupations, went to Germany, sometimes even to Russia. Reflecting upon these routes one might think of dividing eighteenth century Europe into artist-importing and artist-exporting nations. One will also perceive that artistic activity is a function of power and that as concerns gentlemen-travellers it is also an aspect of various forms of social and intellectual prestige. Towards the end of the century one might note another important aspect of these routes between artistic and power centres, namely travellers stopping en route to view scenes of nature. At the same time something rather elusive might be added to these various motivations for travel, an aesthetic taste for nature as well as another form of aesthetic pleasure mentioned neither by Burke nor Kant, namely, a nostalgia for the past; a trip to Italy by way of Switzerland answered to all tastes. Considering the rather novel phenomenon of the aesthetic experience and the generalized interest in art, these travel routes might thus suddenly appear as novel versions of the old pilgrimage routes which in the middle ages traversed various countries of Europe. In this case the discovery of the aesthetic and of art with a capital A appears in the guise of a profanation of the

religious sentiment. It is quite clear that there is more to the eighteenth century than merely rococo and neo-classic styles. But the diversity goes beyond art.

The inadequacy of using abstractions such as rococo or neo-classic to sum up a period is as telling in the realm of letters and thought as in the fine arts. The eighteenth century has for long been considered as the period of the enlightenment: thence the problem, purely verbal and scholastic, of trying to determine whether it is the rococo or the neo-classic part which corresponds to the enlightenment. To think of the eighteenth century as that of the enlightenment is of course far from wrong, though here too there is need for nuance. Also, it is admitted that the eighteenth century does present a certain unity. For one thing the aristocrats of most nations spoke a universal language, French, and those ideas which are generally regarded as those of the enlightenment were disseminated in that language even though they might have originated in Britain as well as in France. Thus eighteenth century Europe has also come to be called *l'Europe française*.[13] While this is largely true, serious revisions are in order in the realm of the fine arts where a reaction against French hegemony first makes its mark. By the end of the century true taste will be associated with the Antique while French taste will be regarded, even in France, as decadent. Yet French taste was precisely that *goût moderne* which has come to be called rococo, though eventually as the taste for the antique predominated, the *goût moderne* was to include not only French art, but also Italian modern art of the XVIIIth century. Thus insofar as taste is concerned it is no longer possible, just before the outbreak of the Revolution, to speak of *l'Europe française*. It may well be that the search for unity which is implicit in the recourse to general terms such as rococo is the result of relying upon a literary and linguistic phenomenon.

[13] see Louis Réau, *Histoire de l'expansion de l'art français* (Paris 1928).

To modify this notion of a French Europe it is essential to distinguish between literature and language on the one hand, and the fine arts on the other. The point is that in the eighteenth century language and thought had reached a point of development which, judging from what happened later, was beyond the point reached in the fine arts, especially the plastic arts (for we are not here concerned with music, which would complicate the matter even more). Thought had taken such a turn that it could no longer be traduced into images. After all, the enlightenment replaced fable by history while the new cosmogonies and cosmologies could hardly be pictured like the creation of a Michelangelo. History, on the other hand, could be pictured, but here, precisely, one notes the distance between the revolutionary implications of historical thought and a pictorial tradition founded upon the veneration of the antique. While an attempt was made to create a new history in painting by Angivillier, on the whole it was the antique which had to represent the new concepts of civic virtue and of citizenship, so that the enlightenment looks most unrevolutionary in pictures.

But a further distinction is in order if we wish to underline the diversity of Europe; one between the development of the plastic arts and also the degree of *society* and *civility* reached in certain areas. It is quite possible to have fine architecture, pictures, and sculpture and yet live in a city or nation of very reduced *society* or *civility*. Boswell used to find that Italy had *no real society*. Mme de Staël in the Napoleonic period found that Germany possessed a new literature, scholars, and philosophers, yet no real society. The *président* de Brosses who had preceded Boswell had found much the same situation, while even before him Montesquieu (i.559) had written in the course of his travels: 'Mes yeux sont très satisfaits à Venise; mais mon cœur et mon esprit ne le sont point'. Thus the grand tour was more than a artistic expedition and the gentleman formed by it was not merely a connoisseur of the arts, he was a man of taste who had tasted of the diversity of Europe.

One went to Italy for the arts, the classical landscape (with real ruins), and eventually for the view of Naples. On the whole Italy remained throughout the century the home of the fine arts, of the great modern masters of the renaissance and the XVIIth century, and later of the antique. The things to see in Italy remained rather constant throughout the century, though the discoveries of antique remains kept on adding to the things to see without taking away any of the others already known and recommended. Boswell's remark about society in Italy begins to make sense: what he meant was that in Italy there were no clubs such as dr Johnson formed in London, nor salons where conversation was a game such as there were in Paris. Nor was literature or philosophy taken very seriously in Italy and the forms of knowledge in that country were still closer to renaissance erudition than French order and clarity of disposition and argument. Thus you went to Paris for conversation, letters, and philosophical discourse, and for a modern city. One went to Rome for the sights and also, as Montesquieu put it, if you were English you went to Rome to see St Peters's, the pope, and the pretender. You went to the various and numerous German courts probably out of curiosity, human rather than artistic, though it is noteworthy that Montesquieu was an acute observer of the residences of German princes and electors.[14] What stands out from the perusal of travel books and notes is that all these people were very different from each other, even though they might have spoken French. They weren't really either rococo or neo-classic.

We may thus conclude that to use the term rococo as it has been and is still being used by many art historians and critics is on the whole to use a rather meaningless term. Decorative styles are but one aspect of the general style of life and the mentality of a period and it might be wise not to found the essence of some *Zeitgeist*

[14] he liked Nymphenburg, Lustheim, near Schleissheim, which he did not find successful; nor did he care for the palace at Ludwigsburg, or for that matter Brühl, though he found Poppelsdorf good.

upon merely one aspect of art and of life lived with art. One art does not always summarize an era, one style is not always exclusive of another, and the physiognomic fallacy ought to be avoided where possible. Rococo won't do.

Review

JACQUES VIER, *Histoire de la littérature française, XVIIIe siècle.* Tome premier. Armand Colin: Paris 1965. pp.352.

Il est déjà suffisamment difficile de se tenir au courant de l'érudition, sans qu'on puisse lire les ouvrages de vulgarisation qui se multiplient autour du siècle des lumières. Il est pourtant nécessaire de faire de temps en temps un sondage dans la masse pour vérifier la pénétration des nouvelles données acquises par les érudits. C'est pourquoi nous avons lu le volume de m. Vier, professeur à la faculté des lettres de Rennes, dont une importante partie est consacrée à Voltaire. Ce chapitre est très mauvais: d'un mauvais goût impeccable, d'un style lamentable, d'une valeur intellectuelle minime, et criblé d'erreurs, souvent tendancieuses. Le temps et la place nous manquent pour nous permettre d'entrer dans tous les détails de ces défauts, sans parler de ceux des autres chapitres de ce livre.

En ce qui concerne le goût de m. Vier, nous nous contentons d'un unique exemple, sans commentaire: '. . . la poursuite et surtout la moindre défensive le rendent enragé, il ne rapporte jamais une pièce intacte et contamine les morceaux. La vraie polémique pare la viande, et, de la boucherie à la cuisine, l'apprête et triomphe par l'apprêt; la voracité de Voltaire lui laisse toujours du sang aux babines et l'on a même constaté à son propos certains cas de nécrophagie' (p.174). A toutes fins utiles, notons que le nécrophage était aussi coprophage (p.191).

Voici un exemple du style de m. Vier: 'Car toute sa vie durant, qui fut longue, ce navigateur effronté et timide qui prenait la

Tamise pour la mer des Sargasses, incapable de sortir du lac méditerranéen, passa son temps à réveiller la tragédie de son sommeil d'immergée et à pratiquer la respiration artificielle' (p.181). On comprend pourquoi m. Vier éprouve si peu de sympathie pour la clarté de Voltaire.

Corriger le goût et le style de m. Vier nous paraît impossible; améliorer ses idées et ses connaissances serait en tout cas très long; nous y renonçons. Nous ne pouvons qu'indiquer quelques-unes de ces erreurs les plus grossières, dans toute l'acception du terme.

Pour commencer, m. Vier trace un portrait du physique de Voltaire, basé sur des représentations contemporaines. Sa connaissance superficielle de l'iconographie n'est que trop évidente. Trois détails précis: si m. Vier avait jeté un coup d'œil un peu attentif sur le 'souper des philosophes' même lui se serait aperçu qu'il ne pouvait représenter les 'hôtes de Frédéric' (p.164); tout le monde sait que Pigalle a représenté Voltaire nu, mais m. Vier veut faire croire à ses lecteurs que par la 'convention' des 'plis de la toge' le sculpteur a 'éteint ou à peu près' son sujet (p.165); m. Vier décrit le 'Voltaire assis' de Houdon sans l'avoir jamais vu, puisqu'il parle de la 'quasi-nudité' de son crâne.

'. . . Il a rencontré Emilie qui lui donne la quiétude matérielle et sentimentale; mais . . . pour une partie de son service, il souhaiterait l'honorariat. Si Saint-Lambert vient le relever. . . .' (p.164). Que d'erreurs encore! Mme Du Châtelet n'a apporté aucune quiétude matérielle à Voltaire, bien au contraire. Penser qu'elle était capable d'apporter à quiconque la moindre quiétude sentimentale, c'est ignorer totalement le caractère de cette femme remarquable et donner la preuve qu'on n'a pas lu ses lettres. Enfin, ce n'est pas Saint-Lambert qui a relevé Voltaire, mais bien plutôt mme Denis qui a malheureusement relevé mme Du Châtelet.

Les chars d'assaut imaginés par Voltaire sont assez déplorables pour qu'il soit parfaitement inutile de broder autour de cet incident. Mais m. Vier est incapable de jamais laisser les faits parler d'eux-mêmes. Ces chars devaient, dit-il, 'en tuant beaucoup de monde, rapporter des monceaux d'or' (p.167). M. Vier a purement

et simplement inventé ces 'monceaux d'or'. Il est en effet obsédé par les questions d'argent. A la même page, il nous apprend que Voltaire 's'entendait à merveille à ruiner les grands seigneurs'. Ce pluriel étant peut-être une fleur de rhétorique, nous prions m. Vier de nous préciser le nom d'un seul seigneur, même petit, ruiné par Voltaire. Nous nous contenterons du reste, très modestement, d'un seul roturier que Voltaire a ruiné. 'La carrière de Voltaire, c'est l'art de faire fructifier l'héritage paternel' (p.166). Comme jugement, cela est une niaiserie, comme fait, cela est faux: Voltaire était déjà relativement riche à la mort de son père. M. Vier cependant est d'une justice exemplaire: il avoue que Voltaire 'que l'on sache' n'a pas 'trafiqué de Noirs ou de Blanches' (p.167). *Suggestio falsi* qui mérite de devenir classique, tant par sa logique que par son goût.

Après de pareilles trouvailles, il fallait bien s'attendre à la reproduction fidèle de tous les clichés aussi fatigués que faux sur l'usure. 'Le patriarche triche et vole' (p.167). Pour le 'triche' passe encore, la terminologie de m. Vier est trop volontaire pour qu'on puisse en discuter. Mais 'vole'! Voilà un mot fort simple, dont même m. Vier ne parviendra guères à déformer le sens. Nous qualifions donc l'assertion de m. Vier de mensonge vulgaire. 'Capable d'usure pour augmenter ses biens, il échoue dans une manœuvre plus relevée que celle où le fripon tente de duper le filou' (p.168). La phrase est fort élégante, mais son sens nous échappe. M. Vier poursuit en disant que Voltaire 'tente par tous les moyens, y compris sa supériorité littéraire, de bâtir sa fortune'. Par pitié, que m. Vier daigne nous apprendre comment Voltaire a bâti sa fortune en profitant de sa 'supériorité littéraire'.

Petite correction, toujours à cette même page 167. En parlant des 'charges sottement perdues', m. Vier, pour qui perdre une charge est bien entendu sot, précise: 'En particulier celles de chambellan de la Reine et d'historiographe de France . Voltaire n'a jamais été chambellan de la reine, et si m. Vier (ce qui serait peu étonnant de sa part) a confondu le chambellan de la reine avec

le gentilhomme du roi, l'erreur est double, car cette charge n'a jamais été retirée à Voltaire.

C'est encore à la même page que m. Vier fait allusion à 'la querelle épique' de Voltaire et de Rousseau. M. Vier manie les mots d'une façon tellement perverse qu'on pourrait douter du sens de cet 'épique', si ce n'était que plus loin il nous apprend que Voltaire 's'épuise à liguer les cantons suisses contre Jean-Jacques (p.169), et, cette géographie ne suffisant pas, que 'Voltaire traque en ce moment même [Rousseau] dans tous les coins de l'Europe (p.192). Cette constatation est aussi fausse pour la Suisse que pour le reste de l'Europe. Même les plus fervents disciples de Rousseau ont renoncé à cette accusation.

S'il fallait choisir le jugement (c'est bien le flatter que d'utiliser ce mot) de m. Vier le plus choquant par sa légèreté, c'est celui qu'il prononce en parlant de 'toute la haine qu'il porte aux littérateurs' et lorsqu'il prétend 'qu'il ne vibre si bien à la justice publique que lorsqu'il se complaît dans l'iniquité privée (p.170). Quand m. Vier appelle Voltaire 'adversaire sournois de Montesquieu, ennemi juré de Jean-Jacques', il est coupable d'une assertion si superficielle et si tendancieuse qu'elle est pire que fausse. Mais supposons qu'elle soit vraie, qui sont les autres objets de 'toute la haine' de Voltaire? Helvétius? Vauvenargues? Diderot? Marmontel? Quant à 'l'iniquité privée' (je laisse de côté la conclusion objectivement fausse et psychologiquement grotesque que m. Vier en tire), on comprend mal qu'un professeur de lettres puisse être aussi insensible à la valeur des mots: il se laisse partout entraîner par un fatal *cacoethes scribendi*. A moins qu'il croie vraiment ce qu'il écrit: nous hésitons à supposer que cela soit possible. Mais, dans ce cas, m. Vier ne voudra-t-il pas nous préciser la nature de cette 'iniquité privée' qui a fait vibrer si longtemps Voltaire pour 'la justice publique'?

L'érudit et élégant m. Vier nous enseigne que 'Voltaire a beaucoup gémi des tutelles morales et prosodiques qui corsettent la poésie' (p.171; il en gémit de nouveau à la page suivante et encore une fois à la page 192). C'est le contraire de la vérité. Voltaire était

malheureusement persuadé que le plus grand mérite de la poésie était la difficulté de la rime vaincue.

Il semble que Voltaire n'ait pas aimé la musique, car m. Vier le dit avec beaucoup de condescendance (p.172). Ce ne serait pas un crime, pourtant cela est faux. Que m. Vier nous en donne ses preuves.

De temps en temps, il arrive une chose bien plus accablante encore pour Voltaire que les censures de m. Vier: ce sont ses approbations. M. Vier en effet cite le vers 'Tous les cœurs sont cachés, tout homme est un abîme' et il trouve 'consolant que ce cri pascalien, nervalien, mais surtout baudelairien vienne du poète de la clarté' (p.175). En passant, pourquoi serait-ce 'consolant'? Dans l'esprit de m. Vier la clarté est donc devenue un défaut? Mais il ne suffit pas de s'accrocher à un mot, encore faut-il y réfléchir. Cet 'abîme' n'a rien ici de pascalien etc.: c'est du pur remplissage pour les besoins de la rime. M. Vier s'est aussi rapidement consolé ici qu'il s'est laissé choquer ailleurs par l'obscénité 'continue' et la 'pornographie accablante' (p.173) de la *Pucelle*.

A la page 179, m. Vier donne comme sujet de l'*Essai sur la poésie épique*, 'comment Henri de Navarre, grâce à l'aide de la reine Elisabeth' etc. Cela est un peu fort, même pour m. Vier. Accident mécanique sans doute.

Voltaire 'trompe sa faim d'originalité dramatique par la virtuosité de sa critique' (p.182). Cela veut-il dire quelque chose? Nous ne le croyons pas.

M. Vier s'intéresse beaucoup aux 'mollets, audacieusement découverts' de mlle Duchesnois; il semble qu'en interprétant le rôle d'Alzire 'jambes nues' elle avait fait 'une espèce de révolution' (p.188). Cela est fort sympathique, mais mlle Duchesnois est née en 1777. Le rôle d'Alzire a été créé par mlle Gaussin, et ce n'est pas sur la scène que cette admirable comédienne a fait briller ses jambes, ni même ses mollets.

Plus loin, m. Vier fait allusion à la 'purée de pois londonienne dont nul ne saurait nier la hideuse réalité' (p.196). Hélas! à cette époque la 'purée de pois londonienne' n'avait pas encore été

inventée. Mais on ne peut pas demander à m. Vier de se priver d'un seul cliché.

'N'a-t-il pas redouté plus que tout autre fléau une Genève solonisée par Jean-Jacques?' (p.205). Si cette phrase possède un sens, elle est fausse: Voltaire a soutenu les défavorisés contre les 'patriciens'.

Il est inutile de le dire, m. Vier trouve pour *Candide* des interprétations aussi improbables que désobligeantes. Pour comble de surprise, il trouve Voltaire exaspéré surtout par la 'quiétude de Leibniz, de Jean-Jacques ou de Maupertuis' (p.217). Encore une fois, on se demande quel sens m. Vier donne aux mots. 'Quiétude'! Quelle que soit la valeur que l'on attribue à ce mot, on pourrait difficilement trouver deux hommes qui le méritent moins que Rousseau et Maupertuis: le premier, esprit tourmenté au-delà des bornes de la folie, le second maladivement pointilleux et dévoré par un égotisme rarement égalé.

'Peu de temps après Lisbonne, il exige et obtient du ciel un séisme personnel' (p.219). Pour une fois, c'est spirituel et même bien dit, mais toujours aussi tendancieux. Le fait ne présente aucun doute et il n'est pas question d'un 'peu de temps': c'est ce même tremblement de terre de Lisbonne qui fut effectivement ressenti à Genève, et même beaucoup plus loin.

En ce qui concerne la bibliographie, nous nous contentons d'un petit choix de corrections, empruntées aux trois premiers titres. Pourquoi citer l'édition de Kehl des œuvres de Voltaire? Elle n'intéresse que les spécialistes et les bibliophiles. Pour le reste, elle a paru non pas en 1785, mais de 1784 à 1790; elle ne comporte pas 72 volumes, mais 70 ou 92. M. Vier cite ensuite l'édition de Beuchot. Pourquoi? Elle ne possède qu'un intérêt technique, puisqu'elle a été remplacée par celle de Moland. De plus, elle ne porte pas le titre d'*Œuvres complètes*; '72 vols., 1828-1834' est faux: elle se compose soit de '70 vols., 1828-1834' soit de '72 vols., 1828-1840'. En troisième lieu, m. Vier cite enfin l'édition Moland; il donne '54 vols., 1877-1883'; or, il s'agit soit de '50 vols., 1877-1883' soit de '52 vols., 1877-1885'. Le reste de la bibliographie et les autres bibliographies de ce volume sont dans le même goût.

Pourquoi un si long compte rendu d'un ouvrage qui le mérite si peu? C'est qu'il faut tout de même en finir une fois pour toutes. Il est inadmissible qu'un professeur d'université se permette d'accumuler tant d'erreurs et de les exprimer dans un langage aussi violent et aussi vulgaire. Chaque fois qu'un pareil écrit nous tombera malheureusement entre les mains, nous avons l'intention de recommencer.

Theodore Besterman

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Dr S. S. B. Taylor
St Salvator's College
St Andrews, Scotland